BEYOND
LOVECRAFT
JASPER BARK ■ ROB MORAN ■ PAUL RAFFERTY ■ MINDY LOPKIN

BEYOND LOVECRAFT

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AS THE FIRST FAINT IMAGES REACH US FROM ANOTHER WORLD, I FEEL SOMETHING I HAVEN'T FELT SINCE HUMANKIND WAS LOST.
SOMETHING SO UNFAMILIAR I BARELY RECOGNISED IT...
...HOPE!
BEYOND LOVECRAFT
MY GOD THAT'S IT, THAT'S REALLY IT... THE LIBRARY OF THE YITH.
DO YOU HONESTLY THINK WE'VE GOT A SHOT WITH THIS CHARLES?
THE ENTIRE HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSE IS IN THAT LIBRARY.
IF THERE'S A WAY TO GET OUR PLANET BACK, THIS IS WHERE WE'LL FIND IT.

IT'S PROBABLY THE TRAUMA, BUT NONE OF US HAVE MORE THAN THE MOST FLEETING MEMORIES OF WHAT HAPPENED.

SUDDENLY WE'D LOST OUR FOOTHOLD ON THIS WORLD AND THOSE WHO'D OWNED IT, IMMEASURABLE AEONS AGO, RETURNED TO CLAIM WHAT HAD ALWAYS BEEN.

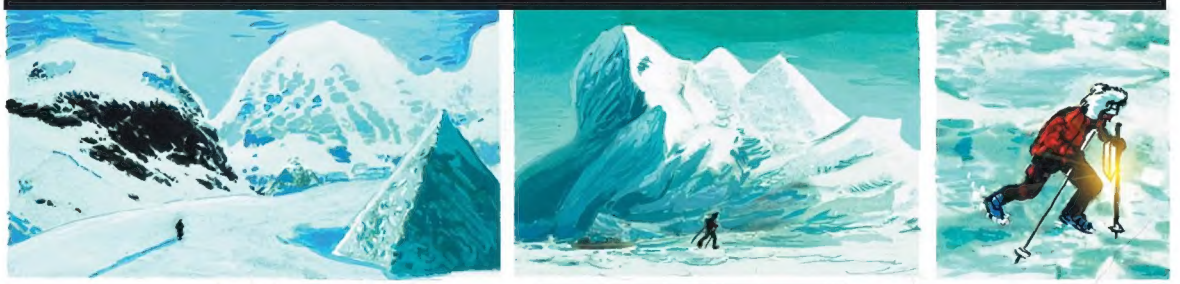
WE WERE ENGULFED BY BEINGS BEYOND HUMAN COMPREHENSION.
WIPED FROM EXISTENCE BEFORE WE COULD EVEN REALISE WHAT WAS HAPPENING.
THERE WAS NO FAITH THAT COULD OFFER US HOPE. NO SYSTEM OF BELIEFS THAT COULD HAVE PREPARED US.
OUR OLD GODS DIED ALONG WITH THEIR PRIESTS.
THE FRAGILE MEMBRANE OF REALITY HAD BEEN TORN APART AND OUR EYES WERE OPENED TO THE TRUE NATURE OF THE UNIVERSE.

ONLY A HANDFUL OF US SURVIVED. THOSE WHO RAN AND HID.
WE LED A DESPERATE EXISTENCE AS WE CLUNG TO LIFE AND FOUGHT TO COME TO TERMS WITH WHAT WE'D LOST.
SLOWLY A NETWORK OF TRADE EMERGED AND WE BEGAN TO EXCHANGE GOODS AND INFORMATION.

THAT'S HOW I MET CHARLES AND HERBERT, SCIENTISTS FROM MISKATONIC UNIVERSITY. THE ONLY MEN OF SCIENCE TO SURVIVE.
AND HOW I HEARD ABOUT NATHANIEL WINGATE. A LONE SURVIVOR POSSESSED BY AN ALIEN CONSCIOUSNESS.
WINGATE WAS IN THRALL TO THE YITH, WHICH MADE HIM IDEAL FOR OUR PURPOSES.
THE YITH WERE AN EXTINCT ALIEN RACE WHO RECORDED THE HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSE BY SENDING THEIR MINDS ACROSS TIME AND SPACE TO SWAP CONSCIOUSNESS WITH OTHER SPECIES.

WE KNEW THE YITH KEPT THEIR HISTORY IN A VAST LIBRARY. IF WE COULD REVERSE THE MIND SWAP PROCESS WE'D HAVE TO ACCESS TO IT.
WE CAPTURED NATHANIEL AND DID TERRIBLE THINGS TO HIM.
WE HOPED THE SECRET TO REGAINING OUR WORLD COULD BE FOUND IN THE YITH'S ARCHIVE.
IT'S WORKING, HE'S GOT SOME SORT OF VOLUME.
IT'S IN A STRANGE PICTORIAL FORM, THAT MUST BE HOW THE YITH RECORD THEIR HISTORIES...
WE ATE THE 99%
the MOUNTAINS of MADNESS

'A GREAT VAMPIRE SQUID WRAPPED AROUND THE FACE OF HUMANITY', THAT'S HOW ROLLING STONE DESCRIBED THE REAL POWER BEHIND WALL ST.



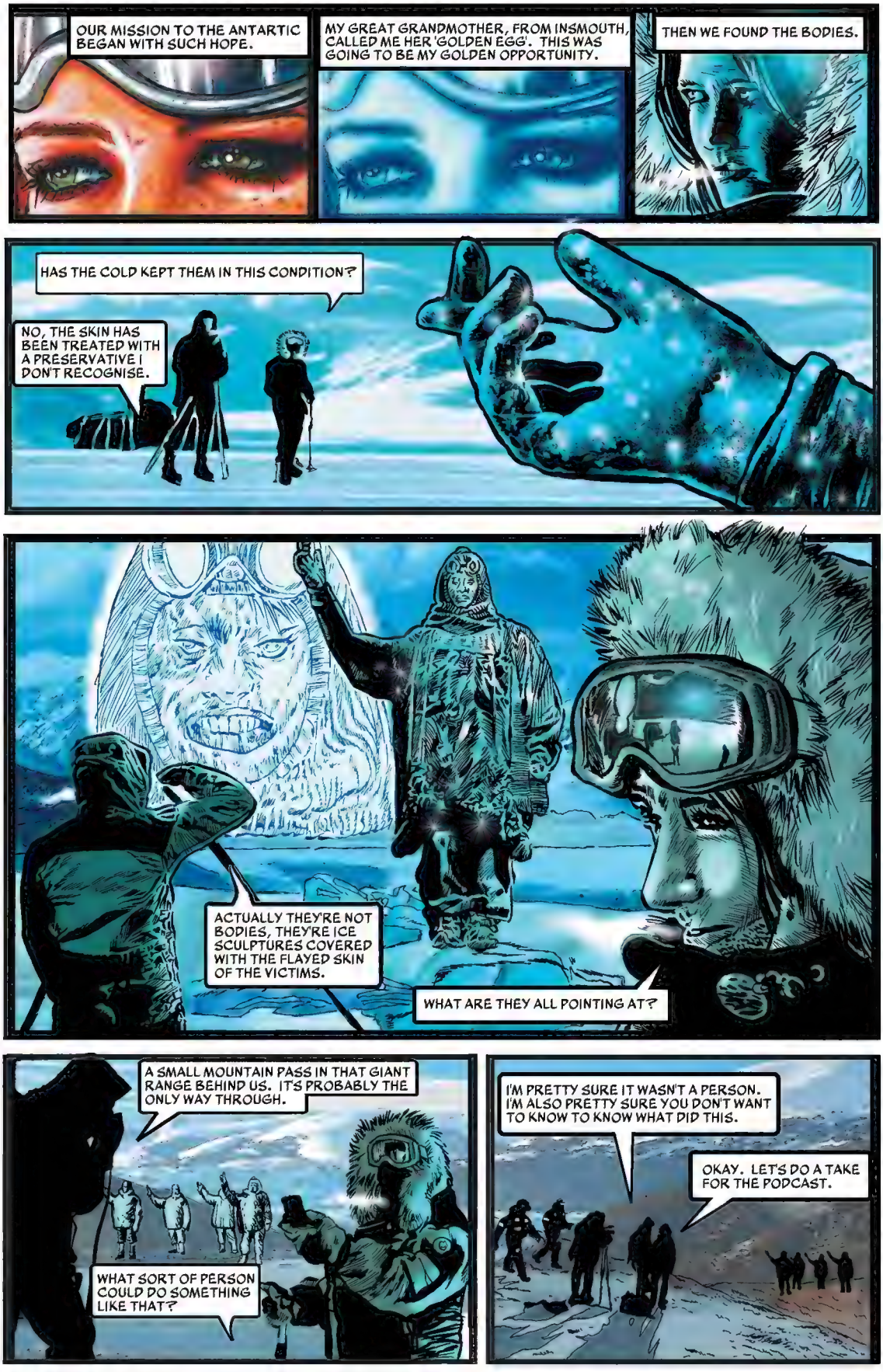
THEY WERE WRONG.

IT'S FAR DEADLIER...

FAR MORE ANCIENT THAN THAT.

THAT'S WHY I'M RUNNING FOR MY LIFE, IN A PREHISTORIC CITY IN ANTARTICA...

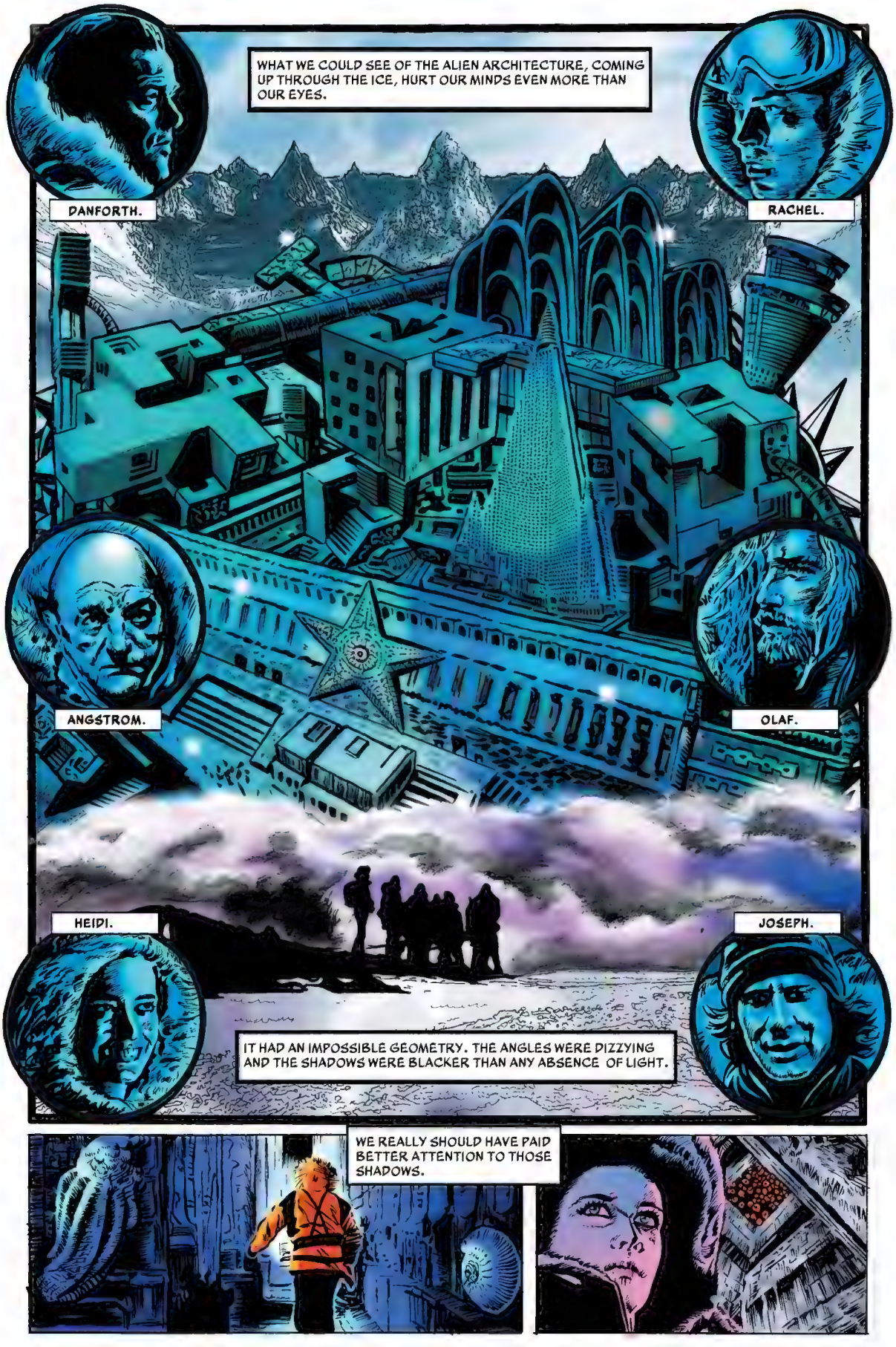
OCCUPY the MOUNTAINS of MADNESS


OUR MISSION TO THE ANTARTIC BEGAN WITH SUCH HOPE.
MY GREAT GRANDMOTHER, FROM INSMOUTH, CALLED ME HER 'GOLDEN EGG'. THIS WAS GOING TO BE MY GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY.
THEN WE FOUND THE BODIES.
HAS THE COLD KEPT THEM IN THIS CONDITION?
NO, THE SKIN HAS BEEN TREATED WITH A PRESERVATIVE I DON'T RECOGNISE.
ACTUALLY THEY'RE NOT BODIES, THEY'RE ICE SCULPTURES COVERED WITH THE FLAYED SKIN OF THE VICTIMS.
WHAT ARE THEY ALL POINTING AT?
A SMALL MOUNTAIN PASS IN THAT GIANT RANGE BEHIND US. IT'S PROBABLY THE ONLY WAY THROUGH.
WHAT SORT OF PERSON COULD DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT?
I'M PRETTY SURE IT WASN'T A PERSON. I'M ALSO PRETTY SURE YOU DON'T WANT TO KNOW TO KNOW WHAT DID THIS.
OKAY. LET'S DO A TAKE FOR THE PODCAST.

ROLLING...
DAY 34 OF OUR ANTARCTIC MISSION. WE ARE CLOSER THAN EVER TO THE PROPOSED SITE OF THE ANTARCTIC OIL DRILLING.
A SIGHT WE INTEND TO OCCUPY TO STOP BIG OIL FROM DESPOILING THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT.
OUR SLIGHT DETOUR HAS LED US TO THE INCREDIBLE DISCOVERY OF THE REMAINS OF THE INFAMOUS DYER-LAKE PARTY.
PRESERVED BY AN OBVIOUSLY ALIEN PROCEDURE.
ALRIGHT, THAT'S ENOUGH...CUT! WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU PLAYING AT DANFORTH?
WHAT AM I PLAYING OLAF?
WHY ARE YOU INTERUPTING THE SHOOT?
BECAUSE YOU'RE GOING OFF TOPIC WITH THIS CONSPIRACY THEORY CRAP. WE'VE NO PROOF THEY'RE FROM THE DYER-LAKE PARTY.
THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS ALIENS, AND 'WE' DIDN'T MAKE A DETOUR, YOU GOT US LOST WITH YOUR LOUSY NAVIGATION!
WE ARE NOT LOST, I KNOW EXACTLY WHERE WE ARE, LATTITUDE 76° 15', LONGITUDE 113° 10' E, LAST REPORTED LOCATION OF THE DYER-LAKE PARTY.
WHICH IS NOWHERE NEAR THE OIL DRILLING SITE WHERE WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE!
GUYS, SERIOUSLY...SORRY TO BUTT IN, BUT YOU HAVE GOT TO COME BACK TO THE PLANE AND SEE THIS...

WHAT THE HELL...THE NAVIGATION EQUIPMENT... SMASHED!
WE CAN'T REPAIR IT IN THAT STATE.
WHO'D DO SOMETHING LIKE THIS? WHAT WOULD BE THE POINT?
I THINK IT'S FAIRLY OBVIOUS WE'VE GOT A MOLE IN OUR RANKS. SOMEONE IN THE PAY OF THE SECURITY SERVICES OR BIG OIL.
SURELY THAT'S NOT POSSIBLE.
I'M AFRAID IT IS, AS A PRECAUTION EVERYONE SHOULD PUT THEIR PHONES, TABLETS AND LAPTOPS IN HERE.
WHY THERE'S NO SIGNAL THANKS TO THE MOUNTAINS.
SO WE CAN CHECK EVERYONE'S HISTORIES AND FIND OUT WHO'S THE MOLE?
WHY SHOULD WE HAND THEM TO YOU? HOW DO WE KNOW YOU'RE NOT THE MOLE?
BECAUSE I'M NOT! I'VE GOT NOTHING TO HIDE SOMEONE ELSE CAN GO OVER MY HISTORY.
I THINK OUR MOST PRESSING PROBLEM ISN'T FINDING THE MOLE, BUT FINDING OUR WAY. WITHOUT A SIGNAL WE CAN'T USE THE SAT NAV.
THERE'S A PLATEAU ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE MOUNTAINS, WITH A CITY THAT'S OVER A MILLION YEARS OLD, THERE'S RECEPTION THERE.
IT'S BEYOND THE PASS THE BODIES POINT TO. THEY WERE PUT THERE TO SHOW US THE WAY.

NOT MORE OF YOUR MYSTIC MUMBO JUMBO, THOSE BODIES FROZE TO DEATH IN A STORM, AND THERE'S NO RECORD, ON ANY MAP, OF A CITY BEYOND THOSE MOUNTAINS.
IT'S IN MY GREAT GRAND UNCLE'S JOURNALS, HE WENT THERE, I READ ABOUT IT.
LOOK, WE'RE GETTING DISTRACTED. IF THERE'S RECEPTION ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THOSE MOUNTAINS WE HAVE TO GO THERE. OTHERWISE WE CAN'T FIND OUR WAY OUT OF HERE.
I'M WITH ANGSTROM ON THIS, WE DON'T HAVE A CHOICE.
THE MOUNTAINS WERE FULL OF STRANGE SHAPES THAT COULDN'T HAVE OCCURED NATURALLY. WE WERE AWESTRUCK AND APREHENSIVE.
NOTHING COULD HAVE PREPARED US FOR WHAT WE SAW NEXT THOUGH...
IT'S IMPOSSIBLE, THESE BUILDINGS MUST BE MILLIONS OF YEARS OLD. BUT THERE WERE NO HUMANS HERE A MILLION YEARS AGO.
THEY WEREN'T BUILT BY HUMANS OLAF.


WHAT WE COULD SEE OF THE ALIEN ARCHITECTURE, COMING UP THROUGH THE ICE, HURT OUR MINDS EVEN MORE THAN OUR EYES.
DANFORTH.
RACHEL.
ANGSTROM.
OLAF.
HEIDI.
JOSEPH.
IT HAD AN IMPOSSIBLE GEOMETRY. THE ANGLES WERE DIZZYING AND THE SHADOWS WERE BLACKER THAN ANY ABSENCE OF LIGHT.
WE REALLY SHOULD HAVE PAID BETTER ATTENTION TO THOSE SHADOWS.

OH...
...DEAR GOD.
THE ATTACK FELT DISPASSIONATE AND EVEN A LITTLE IRONIC, BUT NO LESS TERRIFYING FOR THAT.
THEY SLAUGHTERED OUR NUMBER LIKE BORED SCIENTISTS DISSECTING A SPECIMEN, OR SCULPTORS TAKING A CREATION APART TO REMAKE IT.

QUICK, THIS WAY, I KNOW WHERE WE CAN HIDE.
DANFORTH GUIDED US THROUGH THOSE ANCIENT AND CRUMBLING TOWERS AS THOUGH HE WAS BORN IN THIS HELLISH PLACE.
FINALLY HE FOUND US SANCTUARY FROM THE HORRORS PURSUING US.
WE'LL BE SAFE IN HERE FOR A WHILE.
THESE ARE THE RELIEFS I MENTIONED ANGSTROM. CAN YOU TRANSLATE THEM.
FAIRLY SURE I CAN.
JUST HOW DO YOU KNOW SO MUCH ABOUT THIS PLACE?
MY GOD, YOU PLANNED ALL THIS DIDN'T YOU? YOU WEREN'T LOST AT ALL. THIS WHOLE MISSION WAS JUST A RUSE TO GET US HERE.
NOT A RUSE, JUST A DETOUR. THIS PLACE HOLDS THE KEY TO OUR MISSION, TO BEATING BIG OIL AND TAKING DOWN CAPITALISM ONCE AND FOR ALL.
I CAN'T BELIEVE I'M HEARING THIS.
YOU'RE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEATHS OF MOST OF OUR PARTY. THERE IS NO MISSION THERE'S NO ONE LEFT TO OCCUPY THE SITE.
EVERY CAUSE HAS IT'S MARTYRS, AND WE DON'T NEED ALL THOSE PEOPLE ANY MORE. I'VE GOT SOMETHING THAT WILL WIN THIS WAR FOR US.

ANGSTROM IS NOT JUST A METEOROLOGIST, HE'S AN EXPERT ON THE NECRONOMICON. HE'S GOING TO TELL ME WHERE TO FIND IT.
ACCORDING TO THESE CARVINGS, IT'S IN A HIDDEN ROOM, BEHIND A LARGE HALL, TWO BUILDINGS OVER THERE'S A TUNNEL, FOUR FLOORS DOWN, THAT'LL GET YOU THERE.
IF I'M NOT BACK IN TWO HOURS, COME LOOKING FOR ME. WHILE I'M GONE, HELP ANGSTROM DECIPHER THE REST OF THE CARVINGS.
JUST A MINUTE...
YOU'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE BY YOURSELF YOU MURDERING LUNATIC. I'M COMING WITH YOU.
SUIT YOURSELF.
WHAT ARE THESE ALIEN CARVINGS ? CAN YOU REALLY DECIPHER THEM?
YES, THEY ARE A PICTOGRAPHIC HISTORY OF THE RACE THAT BUILT THIS CITY. THE NECRONOMICON CALLS THEM THE OLD ONES.
THEY CAME FROM THE STARS WHEN THE EARTH WAS YOUNG AND THE MOON HAD JUST SPLIT FROM IT.
THEY SETTLED UNDER THE SEA FIRST, WHERE THEY CREATED PROTOPLASMIC LIFEFORMS, KNOWN AS SHOGGOTHS. THAT COULD TAKE ANY SHAPE AND BUILT THE FIRST CITIES. THEN THEY CREATED EARTH'S OCEAN LIFE SO THEY COULD FARM IT.
THE OLD ONES MOVED TO THE LAND BUT THEN A WAR BROKE OUT WITH THE OCTOPOID INVADERS, WHO WERE THE SPAWN OF THE CTHULHU. THEY BEAT THE OLD ONES BACK TO THE SEA. EVENTUALLY A TRUCE WAS CALLED AND THE OLD ONES AGREED TO SETTLE IN ANTARTICA, THE SACRED SITE OF THEIR FIRST ARRIVAL.

BUT THE SHOGGOTHS WHO BUILT THEIR CITIES DEVELOPED INTELLIGENCE, TURNED ON THE OLD ONES AND REBELLED.

PROFESSOR DYER THOUGHT THE OLD ONES SUPPRESSED THE REBELLION, BUT I'M NOT SO SURE, I THINK THE SHOGGOTHS SECRETLY TOOK CONTROL.

DANFORTH AND I THOUGHT THE OLD ONES WERE IMPERIALIST OPPRESSORS WHO SUPPRESSED THE SHOGGOTHS.

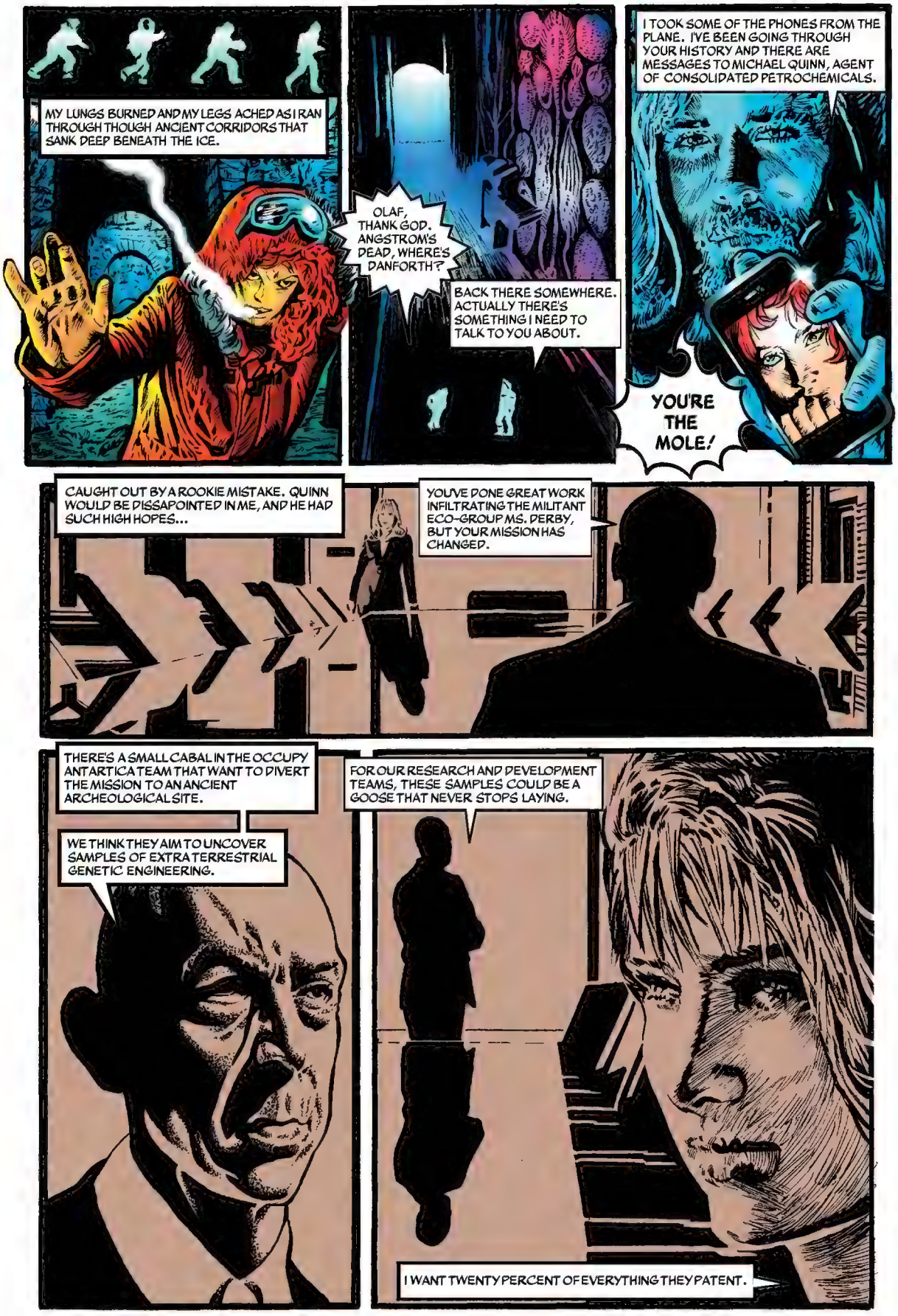
BUT WE COULDN'T HAVE BEEN MORE WRONG. THE OLD ONES LIVED IN AN ECOLOGICAL AND SOCIALIST UTOPIA, JUST THE KIND OF SOCIETY WE WANT TO BUILD.

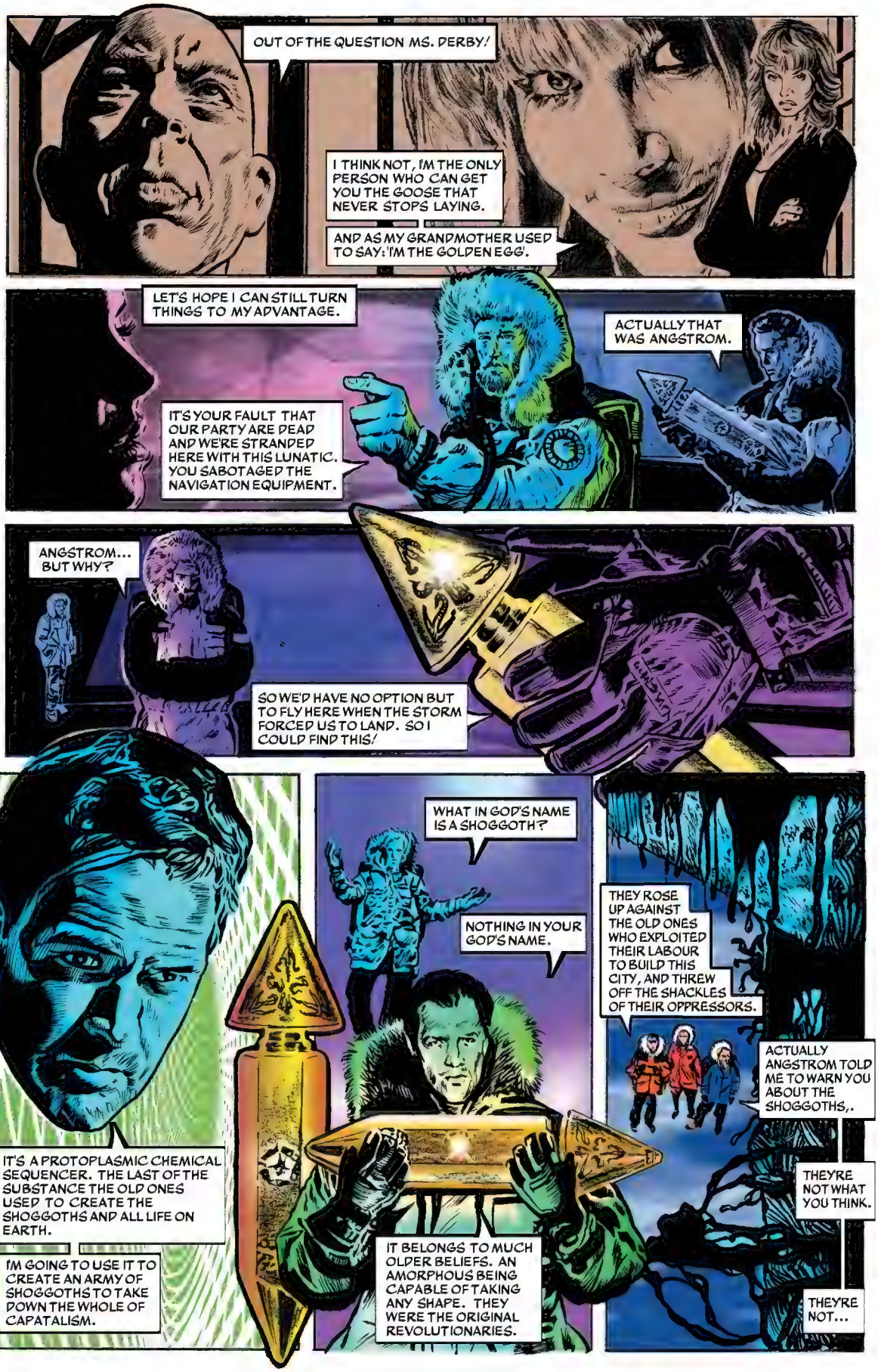
THEIR SOCIETY GOES INTO A DEEP DECLINE AFTER THE REVOLT. DYER CALLED IT DECADENCE, BUT I'M NOT SURE.

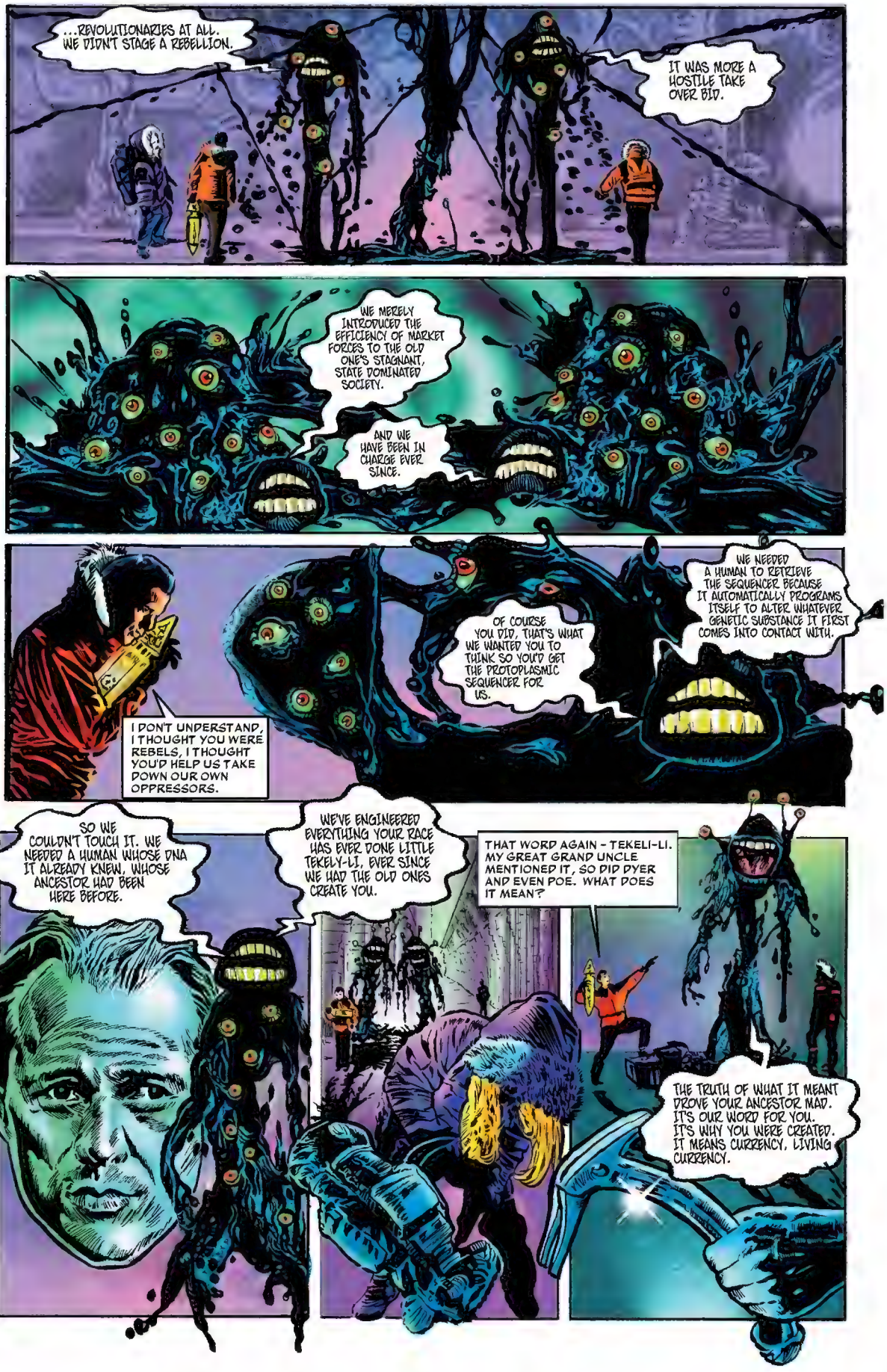
IT SEEMS THEY SHIFTED TO AN EMPHASIS ON PROFIT, ECONOMIC GROWTH AND EXPLOITATION OF NATURAL RESOURCES.

DANFORTH AND I BELIEVED THE SHOGGOGHS TO BE REVOLUTIONARIES, BUT WE WERE WRONG, THEY'RE REALLY...

RACHEL, GET OUT OF HERE, FIND DANFORTH, TELL HIM HE'S MAKING A TERRIBLE MISTAKE...


MY LUNGS BURNED AND MY LEGS ACHED AS I RAN THROUGH THOUGH ANCIENT CORRIDORS THAT SANK DEEP BENEATH THE ICE.
OLAF, THANK GOD. ANGSTROM'S DEAD, WHERE'S DANFORTH?
BACK THERE SOMEWHERE. ACTUALLY THERE'S SOMETHING I NEED TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT.
I TOOK SOME OF THE PHONES FROM THE PLANE. I'VE BEEN GOING THROUGH YOUR HISTORY AND THERE ARE MESSAGES TO MICHAEL QUINN, AGENT OF CONSOLIDATED PETROCHEMICALS.
YOU'RE THE MOLE!
CAUGHT OUT BY A ROOKIE MISTAKE. QUINN WOULD BE DISSAPOINTED IN ME, AND HE HAD SUCH HIGH HOPES...
YOU'VE DONE GREAT WORK INFILTRATING THE MILITANT ECO-GROUP MS. PERBY, BUT YOUR MISSION HAS CHANGED.
THERE'S A SMALL CABAL IN THE OCCUPY ANTARTICA TEAM THAT WANT TO DIVERT THE MISSION TO AN ANCIENT ARCHEOLOGICAL SITE.
WE THINK THEY AIM TO UNCOVER SAMPLES OF EXTRA TERRESTRIAL GENETIC ENGINEERING.
FOR OUR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT TEAMS, THESE SAMPLES COULD BE A GOOSE THAT NEVER STOPS LAYING.
I WANT TWENTY PERCENT OF EVERYTHING THEY PATENT.


OUT OF THE QUESTION MS. DERBY!
I THINK NOT, I'M THE ONLY PERSON WHO CAN GET YOU THE GOOSE THAT NEVER STOPS LAYING.
AND AS MY GRANDMOTHER USED TO SAY: I'M THE GOLDEN EGG.
LET'S HOPE I CAN STILL TURN THINGS TO MY ADVANTAGE.
ACTUALLY THAT WAS ANGSTROM.
IT'S YOUR FAULT THAT OUR PARTY ARE DEAD AND WE'RE STRANDED HERE WITH THIS LUNATIC. YOU SABOTAGED THE NAVIGATION EQUIPMENT.
ANGSTROM... BUT WHY?
SO WE'D HAVE NO OPTION BUT TO FLY HERE WHEN THE STORM FORCED US TO LAND. SO I COULD FIND THIS!
WHAT IN GOD'S NAME IS A SHOGGOTH?
NOTHING IN YOUR GOD'S NAME.
THEY ROSE UP AGAINST THE OLD ONES WHO EXPLOITED THEIR LABOUR TO BUILD THIS CITY, AND THREW OFF THE SHACKLES OF THEIR OPPRESSORS.
ACTUALLY ANGSTROM TOLD ME TO WARN YOU ABOUT THE SHOGGOTHS,.
THEY'RE NOT WHAT YOU THINK.
THEY'RE NOT...
IT'S A PROTOPLASMIC CHEMICAL SEQUENCER. THE LAST OF THE SUBSTANCE THE OLD ONES USED TO CREATE THE SHOGGOTHS AND ALL LIFE ON EARTH.
I'M GOING TO USE IT TO CREATE AN ARMY OF SHOGGOTHS TO TAKE DOWN THE WHOLE OF CAPATALISM.
IT BELONGS TO MUCH OLDER BELIEFS. AN AMORPHOUS BEING CAPABLE OF TAKING ANY SHAPE. THEY WERE THE ORIGINAL REVOLUTIONARIES.


...REVOLUTIONARIES AT ALL. WE DIDN'T STAGE A REBELLION.
IT WAS MORE A HOSTILE TAKE OVER BID.
WE MERELY INTRODUCED THE EFFICIENCY OF MARKET FORCES TO THE OLD ONE'S STAGNANT, STATE DOMINATED SOCIETY.
AND WE HAVE BEEN IN CHARGE EVER SINCE.
I DON'T UNDERSTAND, I THOUGHT YOU WERE REBELS, I THOUGHT YOU'D HELP US TAKE DOWN OUR OWN OPPRESSORS.
OF COURSE YOU DID, THAT'S WHAT WE WANTED YOU TO THINK SO YOU'D GET THE PROTOPLASMIC SEQUENCER FOR US.
WE NEEDED A HUMAN TO RETRIEVE THE SEQUENCER BECAUSE IT AUTOMATICALLY PROGRAMS ITSELF TO ALTER WHATEVER GENETIC SUBSTANCE IT FIRST COMES INTO CONTACT WITH.
SO WE COULDN'T TOUCH IT. WE NEEDED A HUMAN WHOSE DNA IT ALREADY KNEW, WHOSE ANCESTOR HAD BEEN HERE BEFORE.
WE'VE ENGINEERED EVERYTHING YOUR RACE HAS EVER DONE LITTLE TEKELY-LI, EVER SINCE WE HAD THE OLD ONES CREATE YOU.
THAT WORD AGAIN - TEKELI-LI. MY GREAT GRAND UNCLE MENTIONED IT, SO DID DYER AND EVEN POE. WHAT DOES IT MEAN?
THE TRUTH OF WHAT IT MEANT DROVE YOUR ANCESTOR MAD. IT'S OUR WORD FOR YOU. IT'S WHY YOU WERE CREATED. IT MEANS CURRENCY, LIVING CURRENCY.

THE WHOLE OF HUMAN HISTORY, EVERY CIVILIZATION YOU'VE EVER FOUNDED, EVERY WAR YOU'VE EVER FOUGHT.
ALL OF IT IS NOTHING MORE THAN THE MACHINATIONS OF A LIVING CURRENCY MARKET. ONE THAT WE HAVE INVESTED IN, AND CONTROLLED, FROM THE BEGINNING.
WE HAVE SLOWLY FASHIONED YOUR SOCIETY IN OUR IMAGE, AND OUR GREATEST ACCOMPLISHMENTS WERE YOUR CORPORATIONS AND BANKS.
LIKE US THEY WERE CREATED TO BUILD THE THINGS YOUR SOCIETY NEEDED. VAST INSTITUTIONS THAT CAN TAKE ANY SHAPE AND SURVIVE IN ANY ENVIRONMENT.
LIKE US THEY HAVE A STRANGLEHOLD ON THE RACE THAT CREATED THEM. RUTHLESS IN THEIR NEED TO DOMINATE, MERCILESS IN FEEDING THEIR OWN POWER.
SHOGGOTH BANK
YOG-SOGGOTH
Nestlé Thotep
Cthulhu Cola
EXON MAGO
YOU ARE LITTLE MORE THAN LOOSE CHANGE TO US. IT WAS EASY TO MANIPULATE YOU. TO PUT YOU RIGHT WHERE WE WANTED.
WELL YOU CAN'T MANIPULATE ME ANYMORE YOU ALIEN SCUM! THIS IS WHERE IT STOPS...

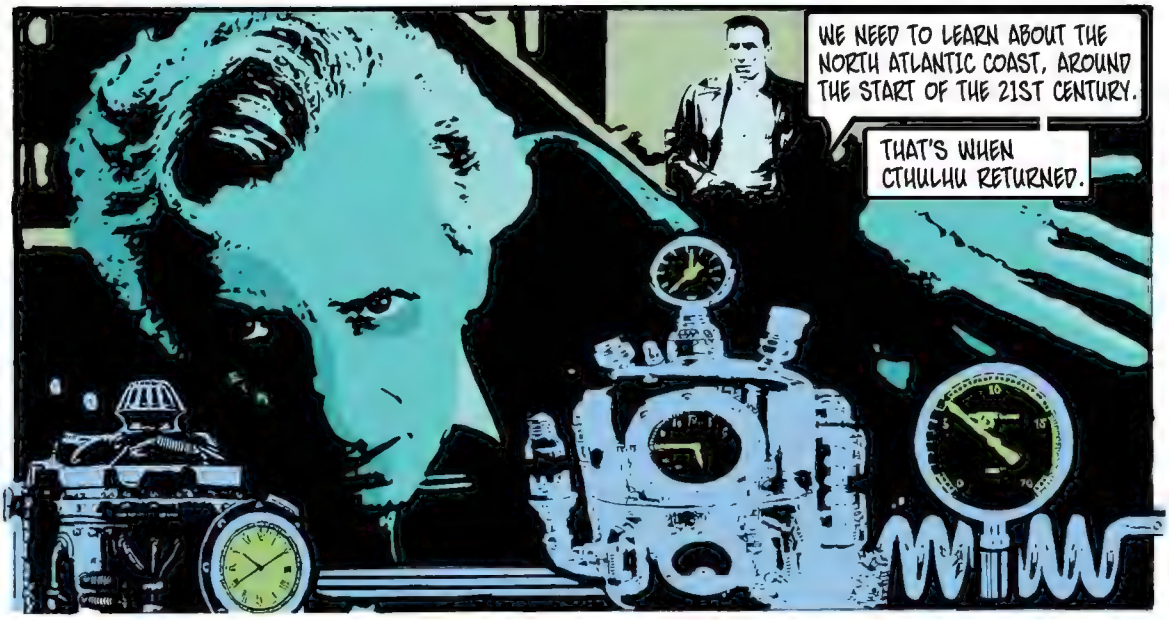
OLAF, NO!
AAAARGHH!
RACHEL, QUICK GRAB THIS. WE CAN'T LET THE SHOGGOTHS SUCCEED, WHATEVER IT IS THEY WANT TO DO.
THERE'S A BOTTOMLESS PIT TWO STREETS DOWN FROM THE BUILDING WE CAME IN.
TAKE THE SEQUENCER AND THROW IT DOWN THERE.

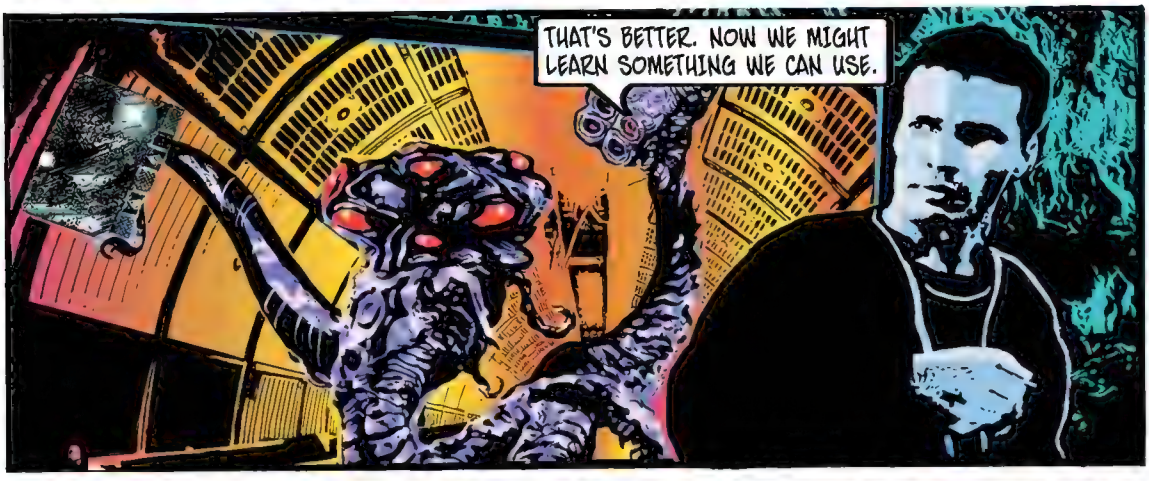
MY LEGS WERE BEGINNING TO GIVE OUT AND MY LUNGS WERE SHOT, BUT I KEPT AHEAD OF THE SHOGGOTHS.
AND THAT'S HOW I GOT HERE. THE STRANGE VESSEL HOLDS THE EXTRATERRESTRIAL SAMPLES THAT QUIN SPOKE OF.
IF I CAN JUST GET BACK TO THE PLANE AND GET OUT OF HERE I'LL BE A RICH WOMAN.
OH CRAP!
BETTER FIND THAT BOTTOMLESS PIT AND TRY TO BARGAIN MY WAY OUT OF THIS.
ANY CLOSER AND I DROP THIS.
GO AHEAD, DROP IT. THE SEQUENCER HAS ALREADY DONE ALL THE WORK WE WANT IT TO.
I DON'T UNDERSTAND.
DID I MENTION WE CAN SHAPE SHIFT? VERY HANDY FOR MANIPULATING YOU TEKELI-LI. ESPECIALLY IF WE NEED TO GENETICALLY RE-ENGINEER YOUR FLESH.
WE NEEDED DANFORTH TO RETRIEVE THE SEQUENCER FOR US, BUT WE DIDN'T INTEND TO USE IT ON HIM. WE NEEDED YOU TO TAKE IT SO IT WOULD WORK...
...ON YOU.

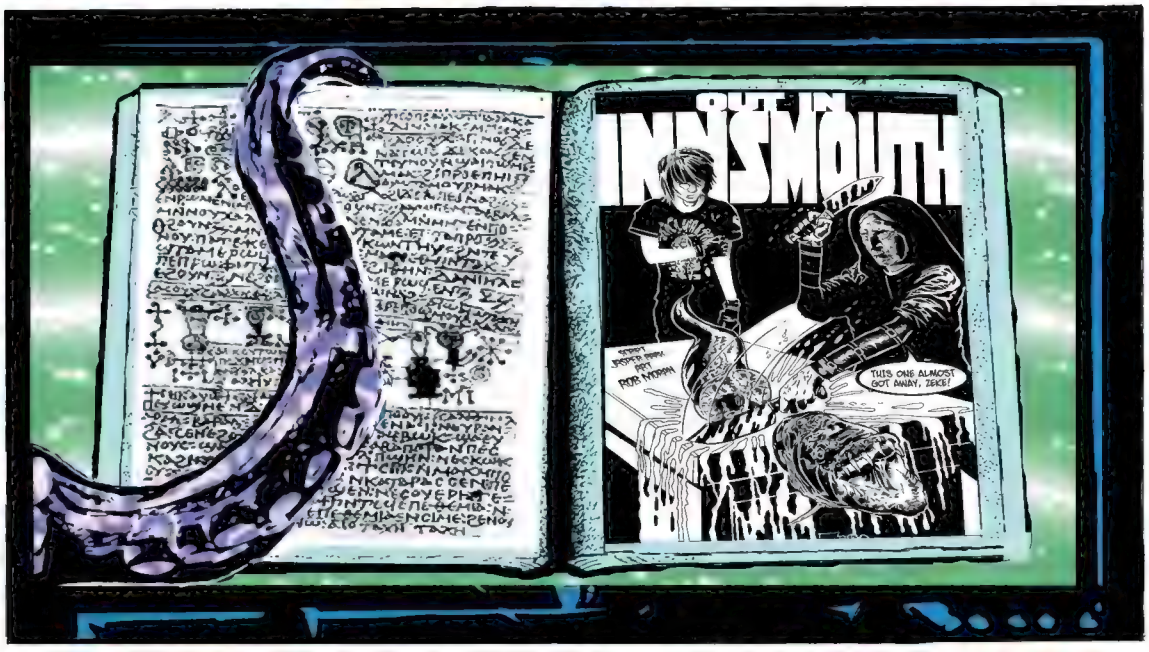
WE'VE RECENTLY FORGED AN ALLIANCE WITH THE DEEP ONES, THE SEA DWELLING RACE FROM INSMOUTH.
WHEN TWO NATIONS UNITE IT NECESSITATES THE CREATION OF A NEW CURRENCY, WHICH IS WHERE YOU COME IN.
YOUR GREAT GRANDMOTHER WAS ASENATH WAITE DERBY, WAS SHE NOT? A DEEP ONE FROM INSMOUTH. YOU ARE A HYBRID, MOSTLY HUMAN, BUT PART DEEP ONE.
ME?... OH GOD I DON'T FEEL WELL...
THIS MAKES YOU THE PERFECT SUBJECT FROM WHICH TO GROW OUR NEW CURRENCY, ONE THAT WILL BE ACCEPTABLE TO THE DEEP ONES.
NOOO!

AFTER ALL, YOU DID TELL ME YOU WERE 'THE GOLDEN EGG'.
AND YOU HAD NO IDEA HOW RIGHT YOU WERE!
THE GOLDEN EGG
THE BITTER END

WHAT DOES THAT TELL US ABOUT CTHULHU? WE'VE STILL NO IDEA HOW TO DRIVE HIM BACK.
I'M NOT SURE, I THINK NATHANIEL IS TRYING TO TELL US SOMETHING.
WHY CHOOSE ANOTHER BOOK ON THAT CREEPY CITY.
CAN'T WE CONTROL WHAT HE READS?
TO A DEGREE, BUT THERE ARE LIMITS, I'LL MAKE SOME ADJUSTMENTS.


WE NEED TO LEARN ABOUT THE NORTH ATLANTIC COAST, AROUND THE START OF THE 21ST CENTURY.
THAT'S WHEN CTHULHU RETURNED.


THAT'S BETTER. NOW WE MIGHT LEARN SOMETHING WE CAN USE.


OUT IN INNSMOUTH
THIS ONE ALMOST GOT AWAY, ZEKE!

Foran

OUT IN
MOUTH
SCRIPT:
JASPER BARK
ART:
ROB MORAN
THIS ONE ALMOST GOT AWAY, ZEKE!

FELL OUT OF THE NET AND NEARLY FLOUNDERED OVER THE SIDE OF THE BOAT.
THE TRAWLER MEN WEREN'T WORRIED THOUGH.
NOTHING ESCAPES INSMOUTH, NOT ONCE IT'S IN OUR NETS.
ERM...OKAY GRANDMA, LOOK I'VE FINISHED ALL MY CHORES SO I'M GOING TO THE LIBRARY TO STUDY.
TO STUDY NOW IS IT?
SIGH YES GRANDMA.
WELL JUST REMEMBER MRS GILMAN LET'S ME KNOW WHEREVER YOU'VE BEEN ON THE INTERNET.
OH I KNOW THAT GRANDMA...
WASHINGTON STREET
WHICH IS WHY I HAVE A WHOLE BUNCH OF ALIASES.

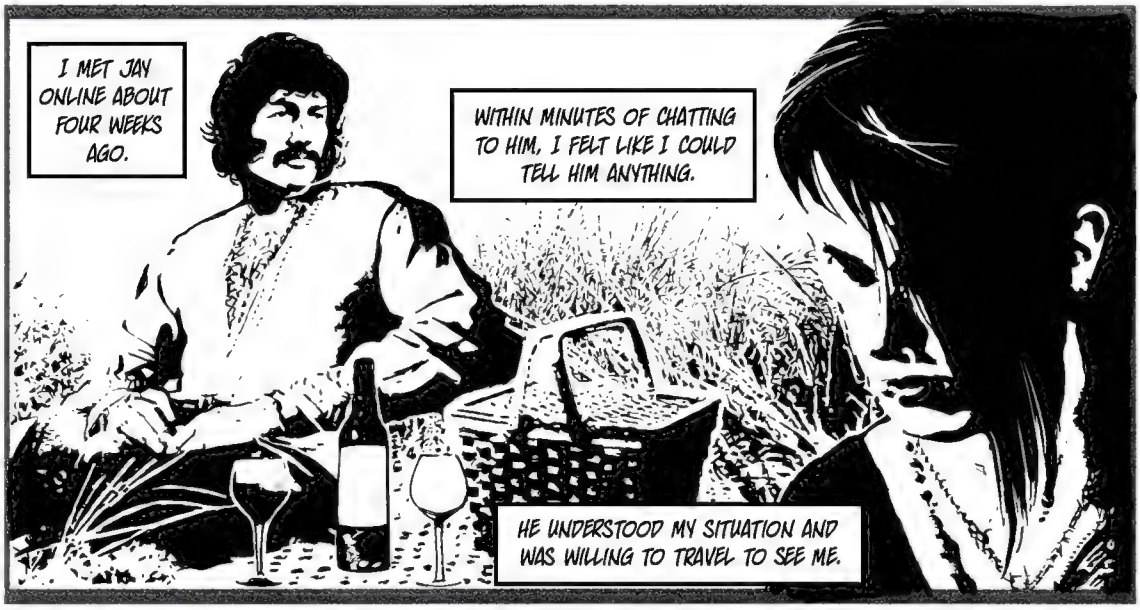
INNSMOUTH, HOW DO I HATE THEE, LET ME COUNT THE WAYS.
I HATE THEE TO THE DEPTH AND BREADTH OF SHITE MY SOUL CAN TAKE TILL YOU'RE OUT OF SIGHT.
WITH APOLOGIES TO ELIZABETH BARRET BROWNING -
LUCKY BITCH.
WHY CAN'T I BE WHISKED OFF BY A HANDSOME POET?
WHERE'S ROBERT BROWNING WHEN YOU NEED HIM?
HOMO
WHETHER YOU'RE A FAG OR LEZ OR THE HOMOSEX HERMAPH OR TRANS- OR TRANS A-VEST!
FAG
EMINEM
PANTS OR DRESS! HATE FAGS? THE ANSWER'S YES!
SHIT, ANYONE'S BETTER THAN EMINEM.

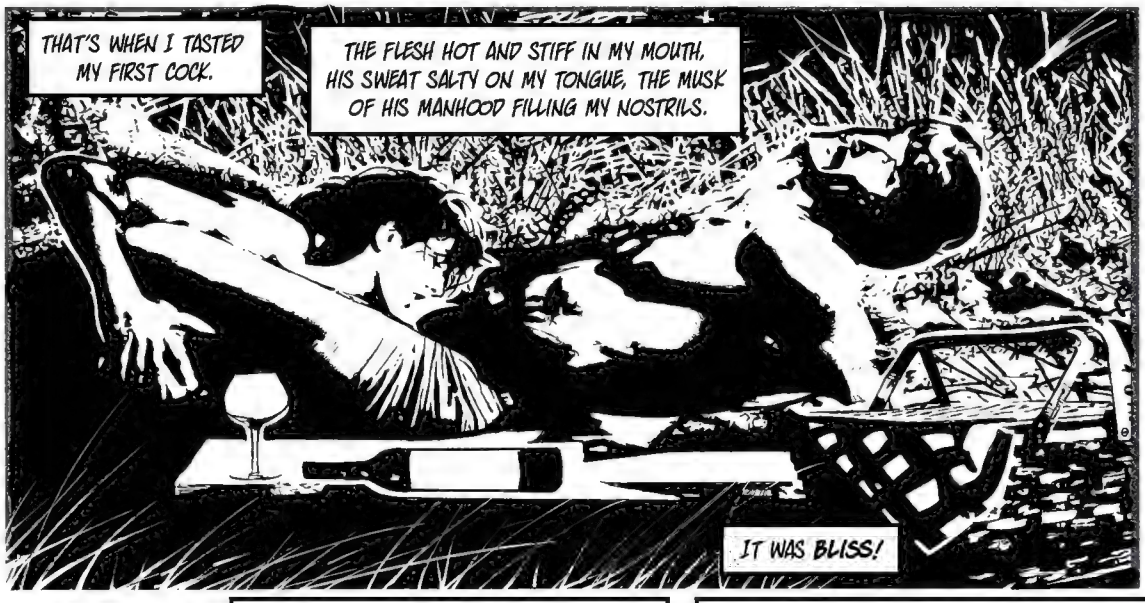
GOD BLESS THE PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM, EVEN IF IT TOOK UNTIL THE 70'S TO HIT INNSMOUTH.
INNSMOUTH PUBLIC LIBRARY
AFTERNOON MRS. GILMAN, I'M HERE FOR THE INTERNET SESSION I BOOKED.
ARE YOU NOW? WELL DON'T FORGET YOU ONLY GET AN HOUR ON THE WRETCHED THING.
AN HOUR PER CUSTOMER, THAT'S THE RULE.
YEAH...
...BECAUSE THERE'S SUCH A DEMAND FROM THE ONLY FIVE PEOPLE IN INNSMOUTH...
...WHO ACTUALLY KNOW HOW TO USE A COMPUTER.
LUCKILY, I KNOW ALL THEIR LOGIN DETAILS SO I CAN SURF UNDETECED.
IF I HAD A SMARTPHONE NONE OF THIS WOULD BE NECESSARY.
SIGNING IN...
PLEASE WAIT...
BUT THEY'VE NEVER BEEN ABLE TO PUT A CELLPHONE TOWER UP NEAR INNSMOUTH.
SO MANY WERE DESTROYED THAT THE PHONE COMPANY STOPPED TRYING TO PUT ONE UP.
TECHNOLOGICALLY, INNSMOUTH HAS NEVER LEFT THE 20TH CENTURY.

WHICH MAKES IT HARD FOR ME TO GET LAID WHEN I CAN'T ACCESS GRINDR.
HAVE TO MAKE DO WITH CHATROOMS AND EVEN THEN I HAVE TO BE CAREFUL.
I MET THIS GUY IN ARKHAM A FEW MONTHS, BACK. HE WAS OLDER, JUST HOW I LIKE 'EM.
WE ARRANGED TO MEET AT AN ARKHAM CIVIL WAR FORT.
A LOT OF GUYS MY AGE MEET OLDER GUYS AT PLACES LIKE THAT. YOU PRETEND THEY'RE YOUR DAD AND THERE'S LOTS OF QUIET PLACES FOR OUTDOOR FUN.
GILMAN HOUSE
I WAS EXCITED FOR DAYS, COUNTING THE MINUTES AND SECONDS TILL WE MET.
BUS STOP
ARKHAM
I FELT LIKE MY OLD, WRETCHED LIFE WAS FINALLY COMING TO AN END AND MY TRUE LIFE WAS ABOUT TO BEGIN.
OF COURSE, I'D RECKONED WITHOUT THE BLACK HOLE THAT IS INSMOUTH.
WHOSE GRAVITY IS INESCAPABLE AND PULLS EVERYTHING BACK INTO ITS DARK HEART.

AND AT THE CENTRE OF THAT DARK HEART IS MY GRANDMA.
ZEKE MARSH, YOU GET OFF OF THIS BUS AND COME HOME WITH ME RIGHT NOW.
NO GRANDMA, I'M GOING TO ARKHAM.
NO YOU'RE NOT, YOUNG MAN. I WON'T ALLOW IT. DON'T THINK I DON'T KNOW ALL ABOUT YOUR FOOLISH WAYS.
GRANDMA... STOP IT!
STOP!
I'LL DO NO SUCH THING. YOU HAVE TO BE BROUGHT TO YOUR SENSES, YOUNG MAN, FOR YOUR OWN GOOD.
YOU'RE NOT LIKE OTHER PEOPLE IN THIS TOWN. EVERYONE KNOWS IT, AND THAT'S WHY YOU NEED TO BE PROTECTED FROM YOURSELF.
'NOT LIKE OTHER PEOPLE IN THIS TOWN,' THAT'S WHAT I'VE HEARD MY ENTIRE LIFE.
IT'S NOT LIKE I COULD HELP BEING BORN THIS WAY.

GODDAMN THIS TECHNOLOGICAL BACKWATER. I MEAN, WHO USES DIAL UP IN THE 21ST CENTURY?
PLEASE HAVE WRITTEN BACK, PLEASE HAVE WRITTEN BACK...
YOU'VE GOT MAIL
JAY HAS SENT ME A MESSAGE.
YES!!!
SORRY, MRS. GILMAN.
I SHOULD THINK SO.


I MET JAY ONLINE ABOUT FOUR WEEKS AGO.
WITHIN MINUTES OF CHATTING TO HIM, I FELT LIKE I COULD TELL HIM ANYTHING.
HE UNDERSTOOD MY SITUATION AND WAS WILLING TO TRAVEL TO SEE ME.


THAT'S WHEN I TASTED MY FIRST COCK.
THE FLESH HOT AND STIFF IN MY MOUTH, HIS SWEAT SALTY ON MY TONGUE, THE MUSK OF HIS MANHOOD FILLING MY NOSTRILS.
IT WAS BLISS!

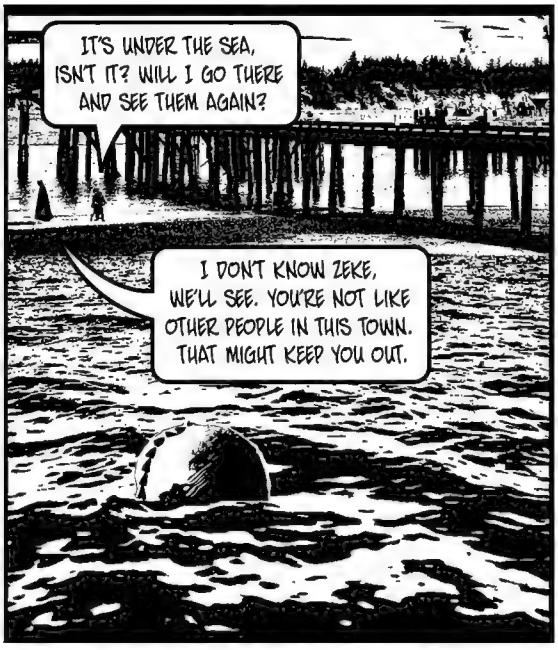
I SPOKE A LOT ABOUT ESCAPING INNSMOUTH. GETTING OUT AND GOING ANYWHERE.
JAY THOUGHT HE MIGHT BE ABLE TO HELP. MAYBE EVEN FIND ME WORK IN BOSTON.

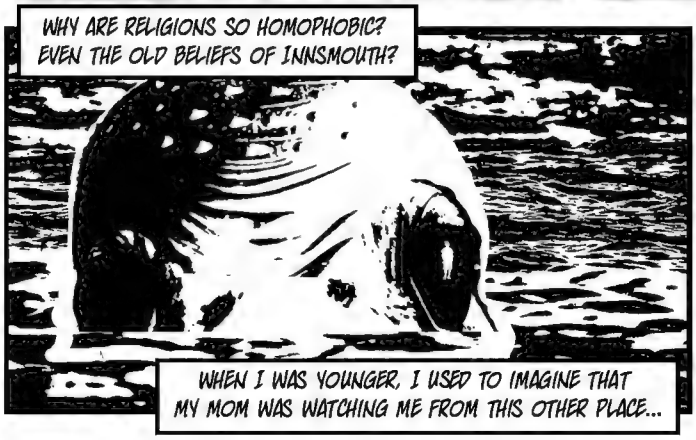
AFTER WEEKS OF PLANNING AND FURTIVE EMAILS, HE'S COMING TO INNSMOUTH TO GET ME.
HE LOVES ME AND HE'S GOING TO HELP ME ESCAPE.

ALL MY LIFE I'VE KNOWN I DIDN'T BELONG HERE.
CRUSHED BY INNSMOUTH'S DECREPIT STREETS AND BUILDINGS.
BLACK SECRETS AND HISTORIC CRIMES HANG ROUND EVERYONE'S NECK, DRAGGING US ALL DOWN.
I REMEMBER COMING HERE WITH MY GRANDMA AS A CHILD, JUST AFTER MY PARENTS DROWNED.
DRY YOUR EYES BOY. YOUR PARENTS ARE IN A BETTER PLACE, ONE WHERE THEY'LL LIVE FOREVER.
DO YOU MEAN HEAVEN, GRANDMA?
NO I DON'T. I'M NOT TALKING ABOUT A FAIRY TALE TO KEEP LITTLE CHRISTIANS IN LINE. I'M TALKING ABOUT A REAL PLACE.
WE STILL HOLD TO THE OLD BELIEFS HERE IN INNSMOUTH.
NO AMOUNT OF GOVERNMENT PURGES CAN TAKE THAT AWAY OR DENY US OUR HERITAGE.

"EVEN THOUGH IT HAPPENED IN 1927, BEFORE ANYONE HERE WAS BORN.
THE SHADOW OF THE GOVERNMENT PURGES FALLS ON EVERYONE IN INNSMOUTH.
"EVEN THOUGH IT'S BEEN WIPED FROM HISTORY. NO ONE HERE HAS FORGOTTEN.
"IT'S THE REASON WE'RE SO CUT OFF FROM THE WORLD."

WHY DIDN'T MY MUMMY AND DADDY TAKE ME WITH THEM TO THIS PLACE?
SOME ARE CALLED EARLIER THAN OTHERS, BOY...


IT'S UNDER THE SEA, ISN'T IT? WILL I GO THERE AND SEE THEM AGAIN?
I DON'T KNOW ZEKE, WE'LL SEE. YOU'RE NOT LIKE OTHER PEOPLE IN THIS TOWN. THAT MIGHT KEEP YOU OUT.


WHY ARE RELIGIONS SO HOMOPHOBIC? EVEN THE OLD BELIEFS OF INNSMOUTH?
WHEN I WAS YOUNGER, I USED TO IMAGINE THAT MY MOM WAS WATCHING ME FROM THIS OTHER PLACE...

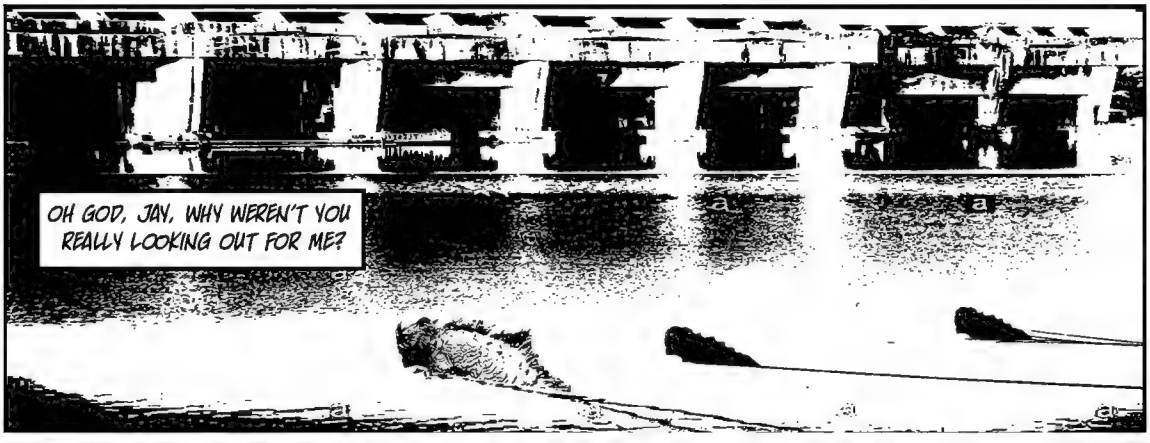
...LOOKING OUT FOR ME...

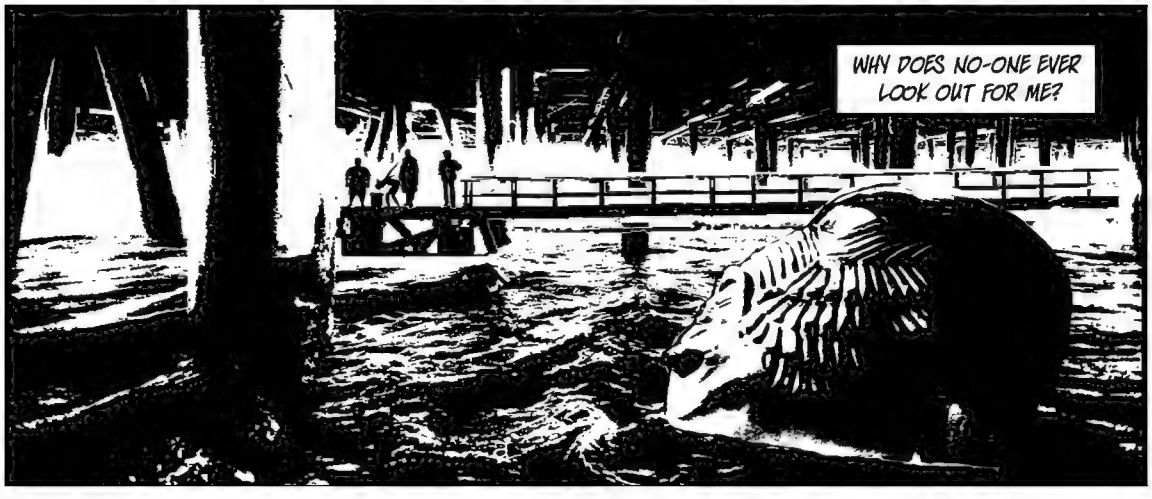
I DON'T NEED MOM TO LOOK OUT FOR ME ANYMORE.
I HAVE JAY.
I SNUCK BACK TO THE HOUSE TO GET MY THINGS WHILE GRANDMA WAS OUT.
IT WASN'T HARD TO DECIDE WHAT TO LEAVE. THERE'S NOTHING OF MY LIFE HERE THAT I WANT TO KEEP.
GOD, I MISSED YOU. LET'S GET OUT OF HERE RIGHT NOW.
IN A MINUTE, THERE'S A COUPLE OF GUYS I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET FIRST.
GUYS? I DON'T UNDERSTAND...
FRIENDS OF MINE, THEY'RE HELPING US GET OUT OF HERE.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN 'HELPING?'
IT TAKES MONEY TO GET YOU SET UP IN BOSTON. WE NEED THESE GUYS, SO BE NICE TO THEM.

NICE TO THEM...HOW?
LIKE YOU ARE WITH ME, BABY. IT'LL ONLY TAKE A MINUTE AND YOU MIGHT ENJOY IT.
I...I'M NOT SO SURE...
HEY, C'MON NOW, DON'T BE LIKE THAT. I WOULDN'T ASK IF WE DIDN'T NEED THE MONEY.
WHEN YOU'RE DONE, I'LL TAKE YOU FOR SOMETHING TO EAT. THEN WE CAN BE ALONE TOGETHER.
SO I DO WHAT HE ASKS. WHAT CHOICE DO I HAVE?
I'M DESPERATE AND THIS IS MY ONLY WAY OUT.
I HAVE NO DOUBT WHAT TYPE OF WORK JAY HAS FOR ME IN BOSTON.

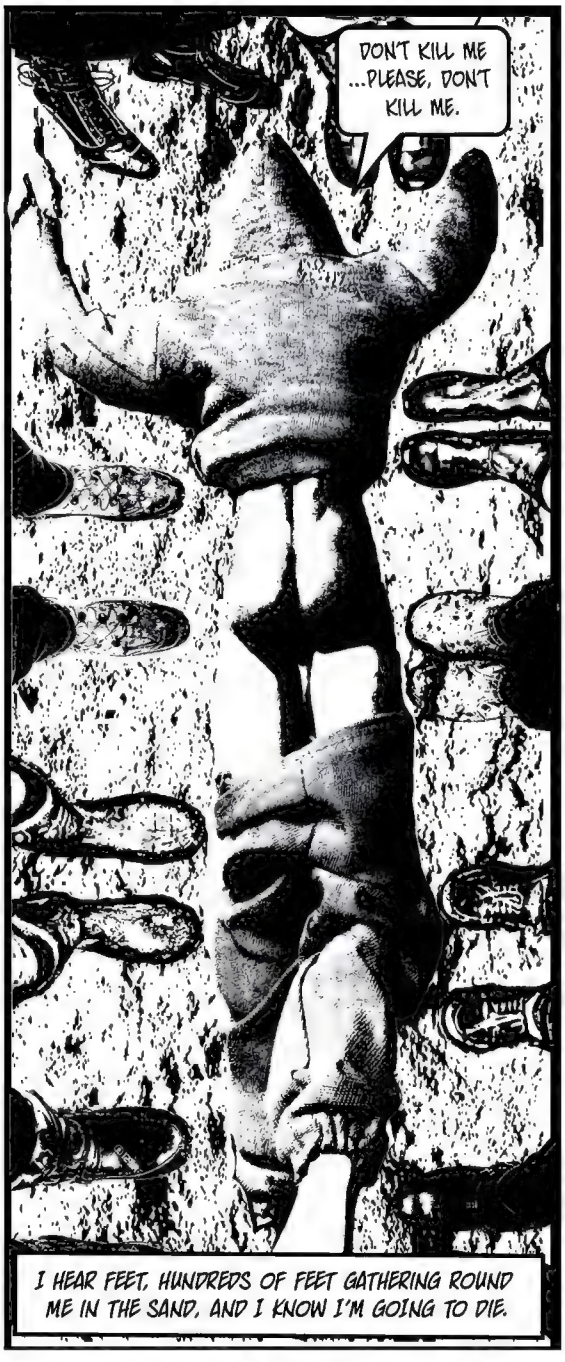
THE FIRST GUY GOES IN HARD. HIS COCK IS THICK AND LONG. EVERY THRUST IS PAINFUL.
I CAN FEEL SOMETHING TEAR INSIDE. I KEEP TELLING MYSELF AT LEAST I'M ESCAPING INNSMOUTH, AT LEAST I'M ESCAPING INNSMOUTH.

THE OTHER GUY TAKES FOREVER.
WHY WON'T HE COME ALREADY?
HE SAYS I'M BLEEDING ON HIS COCK, BUT I THINK IT TURNS HIM ON.

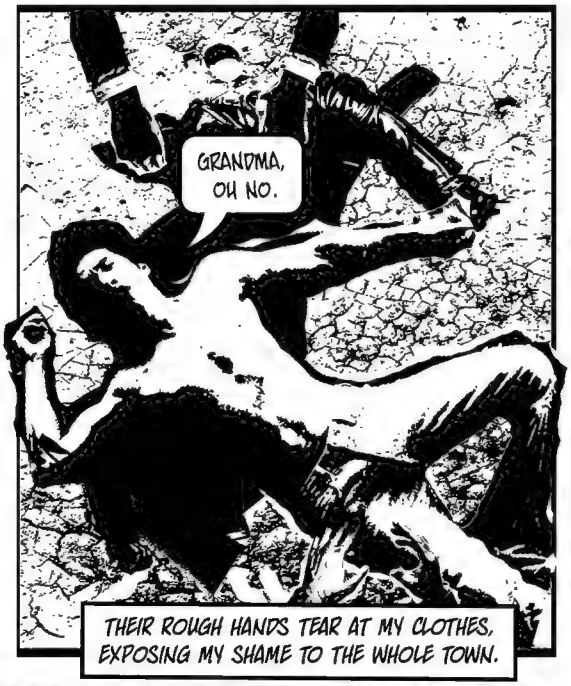

OH GOD, JAY, WHY WEREN'T YOU REALLY LOOKING OUT FOR ME?

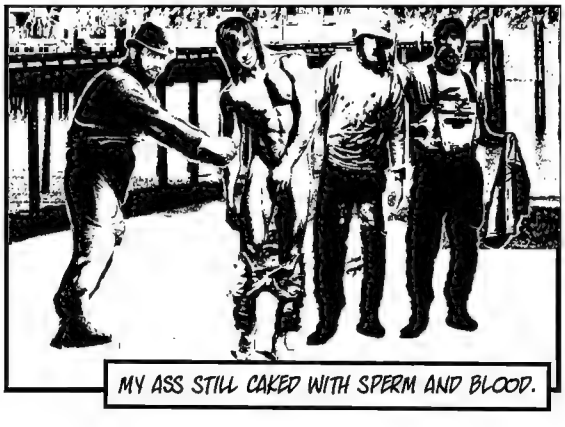

WHY DOES NO-ONE EVER LOOK OUT FOR ME?

RRIIIIIP
OH, GOD...
...PLEASE NO...
...PLEASE DON'T....
I DON'T KNOW...I'VE NEVER SEEN...WHAT ARE THOSE MONSTERS?
BLOOD AND SEMEN RUN DOWN THE BACK OF MY LEGS.
I DON'T CARE.
I DON'T EVEN HAVE TIME...
...TO PULL UP MY PANTS.
THOUGH I REALLY SHOULD HAVE...


DON'T KILL ME ...PLEASE, DON'T KILL ME.
I HEAR FEET, HUNDREDS OF FEET GATHERING ROUND ME IN THE SAND, AND I KNOW I'M GOING TO DIE.

NO-ONE'S GOING TO KILL YOU BOY, STOP WHIMPERING.


GRANDMA, OH NO.
THEIR ROUGH HANDS TEAR AT MY CLOTHES, EXPOSING MY SHAME TO THE WHOLE TOWN.


MY ASS STILL CAKED WITH SPERM AND BLOOD.

HE DON'T HAVE NO SIGNS ON HIM. NOT ANYWHERE. HE SHOULD HAVE SOME SIGN AT HIS AGE.

HE'S NOT LIKE OTHER PEOPLE IN THIS TOWN.
GET OFF ME!
NO, I'M NOT LIKE OTHER PEOPLE IN THIS SMALL-MINDED, LITTLE TOWN AND I'M SICK OF BEING TOLD THAT.
I'M GAY, OKAY?! ARE YOU SATISFIED NOW?!
GET OVER YOURSELF, BOY. NO-ONE'S INTERESTED IN YOUR SEX LIFE. PLENTY WORSE HAS GONE ON HERE FOR CENTURIES.
THEN WHY DO YOU KEEP TELLING ME THAT I'M NOT LIKE OTHER FOLK HERE, THAT I'M DIFFERENT?
BECAUSE YOU DON'T HAVE THE INNSMOUTH LOOK, OR ANY SIGNS YOU'RE GOING TO CHANGE.
CHANGE...WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

INNSMOUTH FOLK'VE BEEN BREEDING WITH THE DEEP ONES FOR GENERATIONS.
MANY OF US CHANGE AND GO LIVE BENEATH THE SEA, BECOMING ALL BUT IMMORTAL.
BUT NOT YOU BOY, YOU WON'T CHANGE, EVEN THOUGH YOU'RE A MARSH, ONE OF OUR FIRST FAMILIES.
WHY?
WE KNEW ALL ABOUT YOUR MEETINGS WITH THAT MAN OF YOURS. WE LET THEM GO AHEAD.
ZEKE, I'M SORRY, FOR GOD'S SAKE, PLEASE...*PLEASE* DON'T LET THEM KILL ME.

SPARE HIM GRANDMA, OH, PLEASE SPARE HIM.
I'M SORRY BOY, IT'S OUT OF MY HANDS.
BUT I LOVE HIM.
YOU DON'T LOVE HIM, YOU'RE JUST THINKING WITH YOUR LITTLE MAN. HE WAS GOING TO TAKE YOU TO THE BIG CITY AND SELL YOU LIKE MEAT.
NO, STOP, YOU CAN'T DO THIS, IT'S NOT RIGHT.

G-GRANDMA, DON'T LET IT TAKE ME!
HUSH NOW BOY, DON'T YOU KNOW YOUR OWN MOTHER WHEN YOU SEE HER?
MY MOTHER?!
SHE'S BEEN LOOKING OUT FOR YOU SINCE SHE LEFT. SHE MISSES YOU. ESPECIALLY NOW THAT SHE KNOWS YOU'LL NEVER JOIN HER.

IT'S WHY YOU CAN NEVER, EVER LEAVE INNSMOUTH, BOY.
"AND WHY YOU'LL STAY HERE TILL YOU DIE."
THE END

The hope in my breast died a little with every volume Nathaniel pulled from the shelves of the Yith's Library. In its place grew suspicion, it gnawed at my heart like the rats building a nest in the walls.

Nathaniel Wingate had seemed like a Godsend, a human whose body was inhabited by the consciousness of a Yith. Nathaniel's own mind had been transferred to the body of the alien possessing him. Charles, Herbert and I had strapped him into our infernal machinery, reverse engineered from the Yith's own technology, and attempted to control the Yith whose body Nathaniel inhabited. Our goal was to access the fabled Library of the Yith, the greatest record of intergalactic history ever amassed.

We may have been the last men of science, but we guessed at so much when we built the machine to control Nathaniel's mind. To guide and dominate his consciousness as it resided inside the Yith's body. Not just dominate it, but to see out of it, to look through the eyes of his alien captor and read the entries in the library. Every thing he read through that alien's eyes was projected on a giant screen above the apparatus. Our mastery of Nathaniel was an act of faith though, we could only bend his will so far and it seemed as if he was trying to tell us something with the histories he chose for us to read.

He chose a story about a hidden city in Antarctic wastes, where Yuggoths secretly controlled the world's finance after they overthrew their Elder Thing overlords. Then a story about a young boy in a coastal town who desperately wants to leave but never will. His most heartfelt ambitions thwarted at every turn. Next he showed us a fictional work that fed off its readers. And finally, a story about an alternate world where Cthulhu colonized fiction so thoroughly there wasn't a story written or told that wasn't part of his dark mythos.

There were clues in these choices, I was certain there were. Nathaniel knew something that Charles, Herbert and I had overlooked. Something he thought it important we knew, in spite of how we treated him. My colleagues were so intent on learning how to banish the Elder Gods from our world they were blind to his hints and implications.

Sweat broke out on Herbert's forehead as he adjusted the machine's settings once again. Charles waved a fist at the screen where we watched through the eyes of the Yith Nathaniel inhabited.

"Do we have to read every book in this cursed Library?"

Herbert looked up from his ministrations.

"If that's what it takes."

I stared disconsolately at the screen. That's when I noticed something had changed. It was imperceptible at first and left me doubting my senses. But the longer I looked, especially at the edges of the screen, the more certain I became that it was altering. The screen seemed to bulge at first, like a sail in the wind, which was impossible as it was a rigid structure.

Then it appeared to snap inwards on itself, becoming concave. I felt the air in the underground chamber, where we hid our equipment, suddenly rush past me, as it does towards a roaring fire when someone opens the door. Only the screen was no fire. It was a piece of advanced technological equipment, and it shouldn't be drawing air towards itself. A small ball of dust and fluff which had collected in a corner tumbled across the floor and then leapt up and entered the screen. There was a tiny discharge of energy where the ball hit the screen and then I saw it land on the floor of the library supposedly countless light years away.

I pointed at the screen.

"Why is it doing that? That's not possible. What's happening?"

Neither Herbert nor Charles paid me or the screen any mind. They were too busy attending to Nathaniel. He was foaming at the mouth and straining against his bonds, his arms and legs thrashing about spasmodically, his body given over to some kind of seizure.

Herbert seemed confused and panic stricken.

"I don't understand, he's heavily sedated, but he seems hopelessly agitated."

Charles looked on in dismay.

"We can't lose him now, we're so close, we have to find an answer."

On the screen I saw the Yith Nathaniel was inside turn and look straight at us. Two more of the large, cone-shaped aliens joined him, all of them seemed to be aware of the screen and were gazing out of it.

One of them pointed its pincer right at me. I was struck with a sudden and terrible fear as it dawned on me what was happening.

I grabbed Charles' shoulder and tried to turn him round to look at the screen.

"Something's happened to the machine, the screen, it's changed. It's not a screen anymore, it's a portal. They can see us. They can see us and they're trying to get out."

Charles struck out violently to push me away.

"Be quiet, Randolph, for heaven's sake, leave me be."

I fell to the floor and rolled under a rocky outcrop in the wall of the chamber. An unintentional act that saved my life.

From outside the chamber I heard the wet slapping of many flippers on the ground. I had no idea what was causing such a cacophony, but it got louder sounding as though something was approaching the chamber.

Instinctively, I crawled further into the crevice beneath the rocky outcrop as my eyes darted to the main passage. It suddenly occurred to me that I had no idea where that passage actually led. How could I have toiled so long in this chamber and not know something so basic about this network of underground spaces?

Before I could think of a reason for my lack of knowledge, the sound of aqueous footfall became deafening, and a horde of alien creatures burst from the passage's gloom. They were around seven to eight feet in height, shaped like barrels with wing-like membranes unfolding from within their bodies. Their heads were shaped like starfish, they had five arms, each ending in tentacles and their five legs ended in flippers. Each of the alien creatures gripped a fearsome weapon as they ran. A weapon whose technology was beyond my understanding, even as I feared its power.

In an awful moment of revelation, I recognized the creatures from a book we'd read through Nathaniel's eyes. These were the creatures that built and first lived in the prehistoric city in Antarctica. The ones who had waged war with the Yith and then lost their city when their Shoggoth slaves rose against them. I combed my memory for their name and then remembered it in a sudden flash. They were known, at least in English, as the Elder Things.

By the time Charles and Herbert noticed the horde of Elder Things, it was too late for them. Herbert thought they meant to damage the machinery and he threw himself in front of the contraption to which Nathaniel was strapped, holding his hands out to ward them off.

"No, stop, this equipment is incredibly sensitive, the survival of humanity depends on it."

The lead Elder Thing raised one of its arms. A giant arc of strangely colored energy shot from the end of its weapon, shaped like the blade of an axe. The Elder Thing brought its arm down and the axe-shaped energy sliced through Herbert's neck, severing his head.

Before Herbert's headless body had crumpled to the floor, the Elder Thing had thrown it across the chamber with another of its many arms. One of the creature's five feet caught Herbert's head as it bounced along the ground and kicked it straight at the screen. There was a fierce discharge of static as Herbert's disembodied head hit the screen, passed through it and tumbled onto the floor of the library.

The Elder Thing ran at the screen and, when it was close enough, launched itself off the floor with more grace than I would have thought possible for such an ungainly frame. It leapt as if it was hopping over a wall and through a small opening. There was another crackling discharge as it moved through the screen and appeared in the library on the other side.

I had no idea how it had happened, we barely grasped the function of the alien technology we deployed, and we had not foreseen this. Somehow it had become more than a device to view the mind of a human trapped in an alien body. It had transformed into a teleportation portal, capable of traversing both time and space.

The rest of the Elder Things followed their leader, leaping through the screen and into the library on the other side of the universe. Charles, who had been staring at the events as they unfolded, suddenly seemed to realize the danger he was in and started to flee. One of the remaining Elder Things powered up its weapon. Charles managed to get five steps away from the machine before the creature caughthim with its blade shaped arc of energy and cleaved him in two.

The severed halves of his corpse were trampled into shattered bones and crushed flesh by the many feet of the last Elder Things, as they leapt through the teleportation screen.

When the last platoon of Elder Things had teleported to the Library of the Yith, and I was finally sure no more were coming, I crawled out from my hiding place. I looked about the chamber. The screen was still crackling, and the portal was open. I could see the Elder Things were massacring the unarmed Yith librarians.

Nathaniel remained strapped into the machine. Foam dripped from the corners of his mouth as he jerked his head side to side, still in the thrall of his seizure. The defiled bodies of Charles and Herbert lay on the floor. There was no damage to the machinery, but I couldn't see how to salvage this situation. There was no way I could explore the library's records for the information I needed now. I would never find the knowledge that might free humanity from the thrall of Cthulhu.

From within the depths of the main passage I heard more flippered feet approach. I looked about wildly, not wishing to be discovered and I spied a side passage off the chamber. I darted down it before any more Elder Things entered the chamber. Once again I marveled that I had no knowledge of the passage or where it led.

My ignorance of the side passage was not helped by the fact that as soon as I turned a corner I was plunged into darkness.

I was running for my life, fleeing the Elder Things who had found our underground hideout and massacred my colleagues. We thought we were being so cautious, we'd been hiding for so long, how did they find us out? I didn't even know there were any Elder Things left alive. Not since the prehistoric times in which they came to this planet and built their city.

The pitch black passage took many sharp turns and I collided with the jagged rock walls. I took to running with my hands out ahead of me, but that didn't stop me injuring myself. My palms were slashed and torn from the sharp outcrops of the walls and my face and body were bruised.

Finally, due to exhaustion, I fell to my hands and knees, crawling along the passage with no idea where I was going. Ahead of me I could hear whispering in a strange and alien tongue. I didn't know what kind of being spoke such language, but I was guided by the whisperer through the darkness.

As I crawled further I saw light up ahead. It had a strange, liquid quality that I found most curious for an underground passage. I got to my feet and edged towards the source of light. I was astounded to see the passageway gave out onto a giant space that could only have been a laboratory of some sort.

Though I pride myself on being a man of science and have endeavored my whole life to keep up with the latest breakthroughs in technology, I did not recognize a single piece of apparatus. I felt as if I were an eighteenth century pharmacist stumbling into a modern research laboratory.

What I found most astonishing was the reason the light that was spilling into the passageway had such a liquid appearance. One whole wall of the laboratory, stretching to a height of some thirty or forty feet, was made of a transparent substance, like glass, and looked out onto the ocean floor.

I didn't see how that could be possible. Charles, Herbert and I had hidden deep underground, but not twelve thousand feet below the surface, which is how far down we would have to have hidden to look out onto the ocean floor. Through the murky waters beyond I could see shoals of sea creatures and impossibly large structures, sparkling with light like a cityscape at night time.

I was so distracted by the sight of the ocean floor that I didn't notice the presence of the two Elder Things in the laboratory until it was too late. They were moving towards me at a pace, carried by their five legs. One of the Elder Things stopped at a console, reached out with several of its arms and used the tentacles at the end of those arms to manipulate a set of controls.

I turned and ran back towards the passageway. As I approached, the darkness appeared to solidify. No light seemed able to penetrate it, and it wasn't only light that was unable to enter. I couldn't either. As I attempted to run into the passage, I slid to one side of the opening, as though some large, convex membrane was keeping me out. I panicked, trying again and again to get away from the Elder Things, unable to understand why I couldn't enter the passage.

Eventually, I turned to face them. The nearest Elder Thing grasped my limbs so I couldn't fight. The other placed a strange device between the vertical ridges of its gray midriff and adjusted it, making a series of sibilant noises. I realized it was responsible for the whispers I had followed.

The Elder Thing repeated the same sequence of noises, making adjustments to the device.

> "Wait, is this any better? Please nod your head if you understand. I believe that is a customary sign of consent from your culture."

I nodded and the creature continued.

"You must have escaped the simulated historical environment. That wretched militia was supposed to dispose of you humanely so we could recycle your parts. Honestly, they're all grown from defective spores."

Sweat ran down my skin, my pulse throbbed, and I found it hard to draw breath. I opened my mouth to speak, to communicate with these ancient creatures. My throat was dry and my tongue moved sluggishly in my mouth.

"Are... are you going to kill me too?"

The Elder Thing inclined its star shaped head with what appeared to be an expression of sympathy.

"Think of it as an act of mercy."

I was incredulous.

"Mercy? How could cold blooded murder be an act of mercy?"

The Elder Thing with the device looked to the one who was restraining me. From the subtle movements of their star-shaped heads I became aware they had reached a consensus.

"Once you know the truth of your situation, you will see it as an act of mercy. Out of compassion, my colleague and I have elected to show you the truth. You see, we also know what it's like to face extinction. There are very few of our kind left."

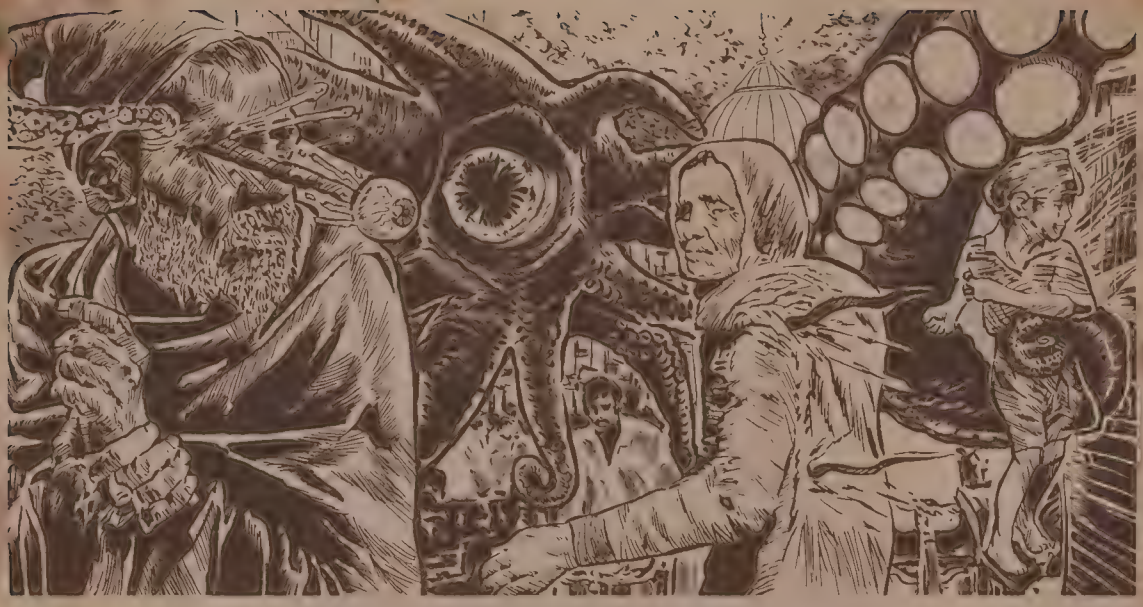
The Elder Thing adjusted the device again. It began to glow a deep crimson, projecting a beam directly between my eyebrows. I tried to avoid it, but my captor held my head so I couldn't move. The red beam penetrated my skull and my vision was flooded with a crimson light. My senses turned off one by one - hearing, sight, touch and smell all gone. I was vaguely aware my arms and legs were spasming. I surmised I must be having a seizure like Nathaniel.

Then I felt something crack in my mind. It was like one of those old clapperboards they used to use in films. One minute everything was deep red, the next it was gone, replaced by a vista clearer than anything normal eyes might behold. There was a crystal clarity to the image that appeared before me.

I was in the ancient Antarctic city from the plateau of Leng, watching a pitch battle between Yith soldiers and the Elder Things. Each side used weapons whose purpose I could only guess. A voice appeared in my mind as I watched the slaughter. It was the voice of the Elder Thing.

> "After countless millennia studying our long and proud history, our finest minds conclude that our decline and fall began with the bitter and bloody war against the Yith."

The scene before me changed. It moved forward in time to a plaza in the same stone city. It's streets and buildings bore the marks of a bitter war which had now passed. A group of Elder Things cowered before the Shoggoths they had once commanded. Many slain Elder Things lay on the ground while others were being painfully dismembered by the mutinous Shoggoths.



The voice sounded mournful and full of regret.

"The war depleted our population and our resources so badly that the Shoggoths, our former servants, were able to rise up and overthrow us. Some of us escaped their bloodthirsty revenge, but others were not so lucky."

The scene changed again. I found myself on the bottom of the ocean beholding a giant domed city. The architecture of the undersea city was similar to the Antarctic city I had glimpsed through the transparent wall of the laboratory. Two beings, who resembled the accursed Cthulhu but smaller in stature, sat on the ocean bed outside the dome, watching the city ominously, waiting for the call of Cthulhu to attack.

The Elder Thing continued.

"Having lost our city to the Shoggoths, our surviving race retreated to the bottom of the ocean, where we have remained, undetected, ever since. Watching your race, and many others like them, first come and then go. Cthulhu and his kind hold sway once more on the planet's surface and they have no plans to share it. It is only a matter of time before they come for us. They are many, we are few and our days are numbered."

The scene now moved to a hi-tech workshop. A group of Elder Thing technicians were assembling the very contraption Nathaniel was strapped to. This didn't make sense. I thought Charles, Herbert and I had constructed it. We certainly proceeded with that assumption. I wracked my brains to recall our efforts but try as I might, I couldn't remember one detail of building or designing the device. Why was that?

The Elder Thing offered an explanation, but I did not want to hear it.

"While our population may have declined, over the millennia our technology has continued to advance. We developed the technology to convert living matter into psychic energy and project it across space and time. This, we realized would give us the ability to travel back in time and attack the Yith before they launched any offensive against us, ending the war before it had even begun. But for this to happen, we needed the Yith to transfer a mind into our time, so we could open a connection. As their hated enemies, we knew they would never attempt to transfer one of their minds into an Elder Thing. So, we had to find a time they had no record of, a period in history they couldn't resist studying."

The scenes faded from behind my eyes, slipping away like fleeting dreams in a witch house. I saw only the crimson light, then that too faded and my senses returned, one by one. I was faced once more with my captors. I no longer heard the Elder Thing's voice in my head, it addressed me instead from the device.

"We knew they had no record of Cthulhu's return or the extinction of humanity that followed."

My jaw moved wordlessly for a moment and then I found the ability to speak.

"What do you mean, humanity isn't extinct, we're... we're hiding, regrouping, we have a plan to fight back."

The Elder Thing looked at me once again with the star shaped expression that passed for pity.

"I'm afraid you've been extinct for a very long time. Yes, you hid. Yes you fought back, after a fashion,

but you were never going to win. The events I related took place millennia ago."

"But... but, I'm alive, I'm here. I've just lived through those events. I don't understand."

"It was part of our plan. Knowing the Yith were so interested in the time but had no access, we recreated it for them. Our genetic engineers revived a long dead species from trace DNA and grew human clones. Once the clones were accelerated to maturity, a process that took mere months, we created artificial memories, a whole lifetime of events that never occurred. Then we placed these cloned humans in simulated environments built here under the ocean but created to look exactly like the surface of the Earth in their time, thousands of years ago."

"We baited the trap and we waited for it to be sprung. We got lucky, a Yith mind inhabited one of the clones we created, the creature you call Na-than-iel. You, Her-bert and Chi-arless were programmed to capture him and strap him into the machine we built to open a portal into the ancient Yith library. You were programmed to think you were searching for the information in the library that would allow you to save yourselves from the fate your species had already suffered. This was entirely purposeful. We knew the Yith, in their arrogance and

overconfidence would try to outplay you at your own game, never suspecting that they themselves were being played."

I shook my head. I didn't want to accept what I was being told. I was still fighting the truth of it, still looking for a better answer.

"So, those... those beings who jumped through the screen..."

"They were the first wave of the invasion into the past, attacking the heart of the Yith home-world, destroying all they hold most dear, their precious library. This will create shock and awe and make annihilating them all the more achievable. In a matter of days, we will have wiped out our greatest enemy before they even rise against us. We will have altered the timelines and our current, ignominious existence will never have happened. We will still be inhabiting our cities across this planet's surface. Your race, and those that followed it, will never evolve from the lifeforms that came after us."

This was too much to accept. My whole life, my memories, everything was a lie, created by an alien race as a devilish counter measure in a war that was being waged over eons.

"I don't want to believe you."

"I know you don't, but in a moment you will have no choice."

The Elder Thing with the device turned and began to walk through the laboratory. My restrainer started to follow. I struggled weakly and it tightened its hold around me, crushing my ribcage. I let my body go limp. It's grip relaxed and I could breathe.

We moved from the laboratory into an enclosed space that appeared to be a cross between an operating theater and a fungiculture farm. In one section there were large vats in which long filaments of flesh colored mycelium were growing. Next to the vats were enormous petri dishes, at least two meters in diameter, where the mycelium was reforming into what appeared to be human body parts. In one I saw arms and legs, very like my own. In another I saw three disembodied heads, each one the spit of Herbert.

Along the wall were several full body replicas of Charles, Nathaniel, Herbert and me. Each one was opened up and vivisected, in some the organs were labelled with an alien text while others labelled the skeletal structure.

My temperature plummeted. My stomach turned over. Tears ran down my cheeks and I couldn't stop myself from shaking, in spite of the grip of the Elder Thing.

"It's true, isn't it, everything you said, it's all true. Am I... Am I...?"

"The last of your kind. Yes. Your life has been brief, but not without purpose. You have prevented the extinction of my race, if not your own. But yours would be a very lonely and isolated existence if we were to prolong it."

"Please, please don't kill me."

"Ah the indomitable survival instinct, so strong in your species despite your mortality and your tiny life span. That too, was programmed into you and will be terminated in a little while. But first you have one last task. Our universe's timeline is about to change. History as we all know it is being destroyed and rewritten. We are making comprehensive records of our whole knowledge and history so we can send it back in time and bequeath it to the Elder Things who will prosper in the new timeline. A timeline in which humanity will never exist."

"You will record your story for us. It will make a nice little oddity for the Elder Things whose universe will replace this one. Yours will be the only voice to survive of a race that once was but will now never be. It is quite an honor."

"What if I refuse?"

"Don't be so foolish."

They placed me in one of the giant petri dishes. The strands of mycelium within it reached up and wrapped themselves around my

wrists and ankles, holding me fast. The Elder Thing took off the device through which it had been speaking and placed it on the edge of the dish. It began to glow blue this time. A beam of pure blue light shot from the device into my chest.

I began to speak, involuntarily. I told my whole story. The Cthulhu apocalypse as I had lived it. Or at least as I believed I had. How I had become a mere shadow of a race that never was, a shadow out of time. Now I am almost done.

When this account ends, so does my life.

So does

every

trace

of human consciousness

in the universe.

Morton Meets A Mi-Go!

The following pages were originally drawn as a unique perk for our Indiegogo campaign and a limited edition printing was sent out to a select number of backers.

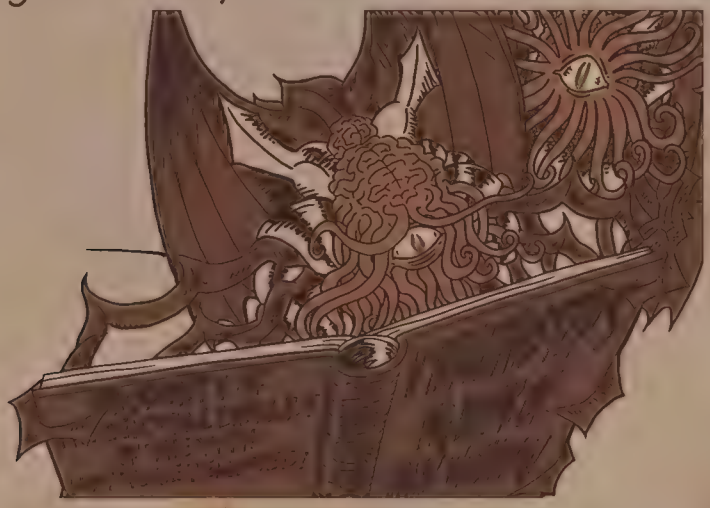
The idea came from a panel that Rob drew on the opening page of the story The Thrall of Cthulhu. The page is included elsewhere in this volume. The panel contained a front cover of a Dr Seuss pastiche called "**Morton Meets a Mi-Go.**" Rob and I thought it would be fun to produce this actual book as we both wanted to read it. However, Rob was unable to draw the story in the end so the equally talented, and equally crazy, Paul Rafferty stepped in to do the honours and I think you'll agree he did an excellent job.

Such a good job in fact, that we thought it deserved a wider audience so we've included it as one of many bonus features in this volume. To add extra value to these bonus features we've made sure that this version of Morton Meets a Mi-Go is unique to this volume and has never been seen in this form before.

Paul envisioned this version as an edition found tucked away in a charity shop that had not been kept in too a good condition, a bit battered, torn and decidedly worse for wear.

But obviously still readable

Enjoy, and never forget:
"A fungus is deadly, whether full size or small".



MORTON
MEETS A
MI-GO
By Dr. Seuss
– as told to Jasper Park
& Paul Rafferty,
based on an idea
by Rob Moran
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MORTON MEETS A MI-GO

By Dr. Sothoth

assisted by:
Jasper Bark (words) & Paul Rafferty (art)
from an original idea by Rob Moran

On the fifteenth of May, in the Jungle of Kled,
In the dark of the night, when the hope had all fled.
Our tale it began with the strangest of ploys,
When Morton the elephant heard a strange noise.

Z Z Z Z Z Z

Help!

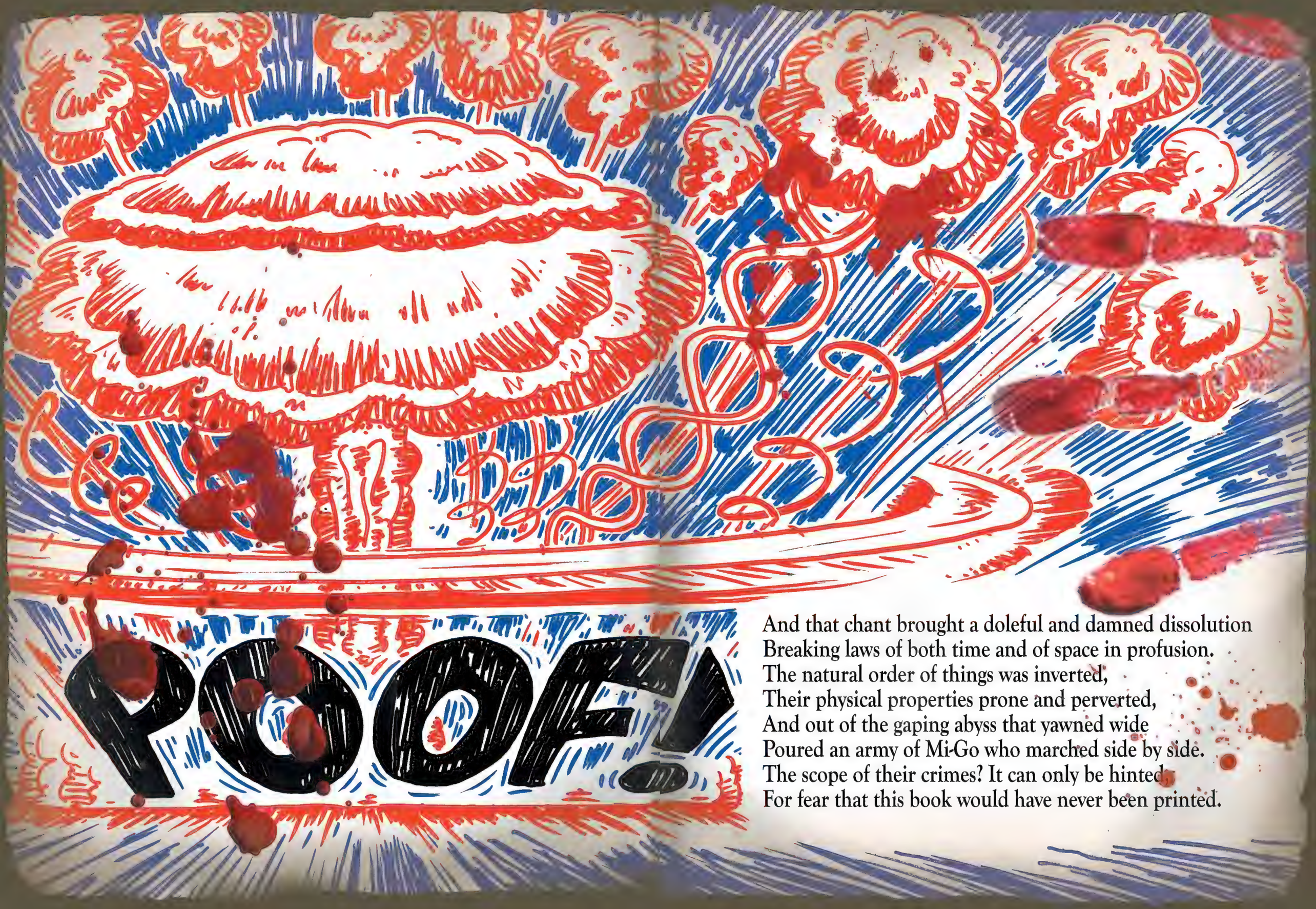
It sounded at first like an awfully faint yelp,
As though some small victim was screaming for help.
"Just hold on," said Morton. "I'll come to your aid."
"But I can't quite make out where you are I'm afraid."
Then he caught sight of something he'd not seen before,
A tiny, but somewhat eldritch, fungus spore.

Even tinier still, on its surface there dwelled
Microscopic Mi-Go, it was they who had yelled.
A trans-stellar colony who once lost their way
Through dimensions unimagined, that shrank them away.
Morton must help them re-grow and move on
By chanting a spell from the Necronomicon.
This tome it lay perched in a dead Wizard's tomb,
In a ruined Ivory Palace in the dank jungle's gloom.

With the spore carefully placed on a handy toadstool,
After tramping through terrain both deadly and cruel,
Morton was met at the ruined palace gate
With a cry of: "Pray caution friend, you hold the fate
"Of the world on that vile speck of fungoid confetti!"
It was Hetty and Betty - the two-headed Yeti.
"Please don't read that chant from the Necronomicon.
"Or the weft of creation will soon come undone.
"For Abdul Alhazred, who heard Cthulhu's call,
"Said fungus is deadly, whether full-sized or small!"

But Morton ignored the beast's ignoble plea
Committed to the cause of Mi-Go liberty!
And deep in the dark palace, entering the tomb,
He spied not the tentacles bent on his doom.
It was blind Old Jed Octopoid fresh from a well
That was said to stretch down to the rivers of Hell.
"Heed me proud pachyderm, do not read aloud
"From that cursed book, no matter what you have vowed!"
Said the Octopoid. "Fight them you're under their thrall,
"For a fungus is deadly whether full sized or small!"

But Morton was unmoved by all their imploring
As deaf as blind Azathoth, lulled by pipes, snoring.
He strode to the altar and there on display
Was the book, pages open to the words he must say.
Hetty and Betty and the blind octopoid
Did their best to stop Morton from seeing all destroyed.
They bound him with ropes, pulled him into a cage,
To stop him from chanting the spell on that page.
But Morton, undaunted by their molestation,
Spoke aloud those dire words of that dread incantation.



And that chant brought a doleful and damned dissolution
Breaking laws of both time and of space in profusion.
The natural order of things was inverted,
Their physical properties prone and perverted,
And out of the gaping abyss that yawned wide
Poured an army of Mi-Go who marched side by side.
The scope of their crimes? It can only be hinted,
For fear that this book would have never been printed.

But what of our characters, how did they fare?
Things didn't end happily, I'm sure you're aware.
If only poor Morton, chose some other path,
You wouldn't be witness to this aftermath.
If he'd only remembered one thing above all:
That a fungus is deadly whether full sized or small!

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Meal out.

Work

Morton the elephant has a big heart and an ever bigger mission, to save the tiny Mi-Gos who live on a microscopic fungus spore. Along the way Morton learns the most important lesson of all: "A fungus is deadly whether full size or small".

A literary mash up of H. P Lovecraft and Dr Seuss, Morton Meets a Mi-Go is a haunting tale that teaches the reader to be intolerant and fearful of anything that is different to them. It introduces readers of all ages to the cosmic indifference of a mechanistic universe that cares little for human existence. After all, our whole race is little more than a film of mould on an insignificant speck of dust floating through the void.

Suitable for children and adults of a macabre, and frankly psychopathic, disposition.

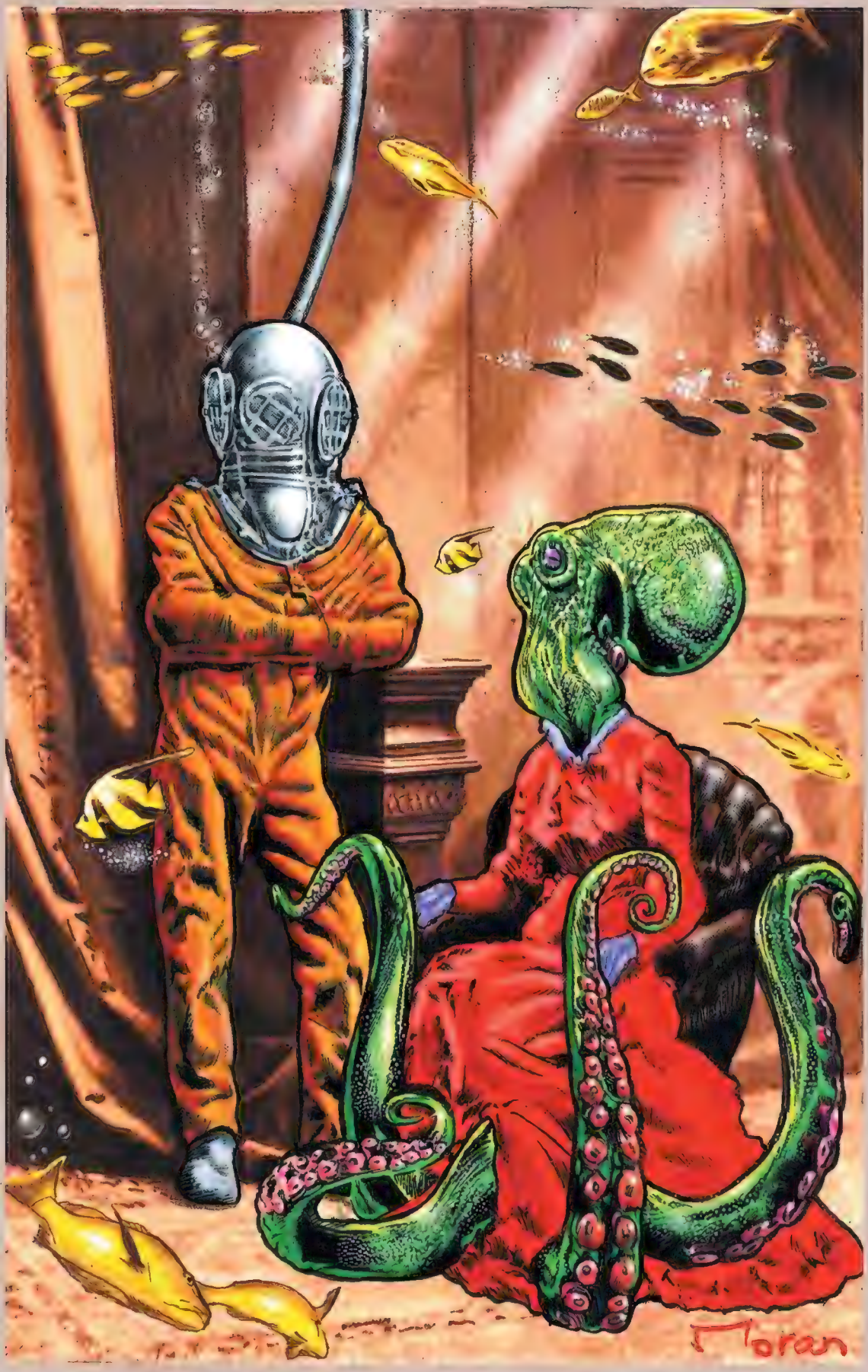
Incidentally:

for BEGINNER READERS there is a very special book...

THE NECRONOMICON

This is not one you read to your child.
Your child reads every word themselves!

Bonus Material
Foran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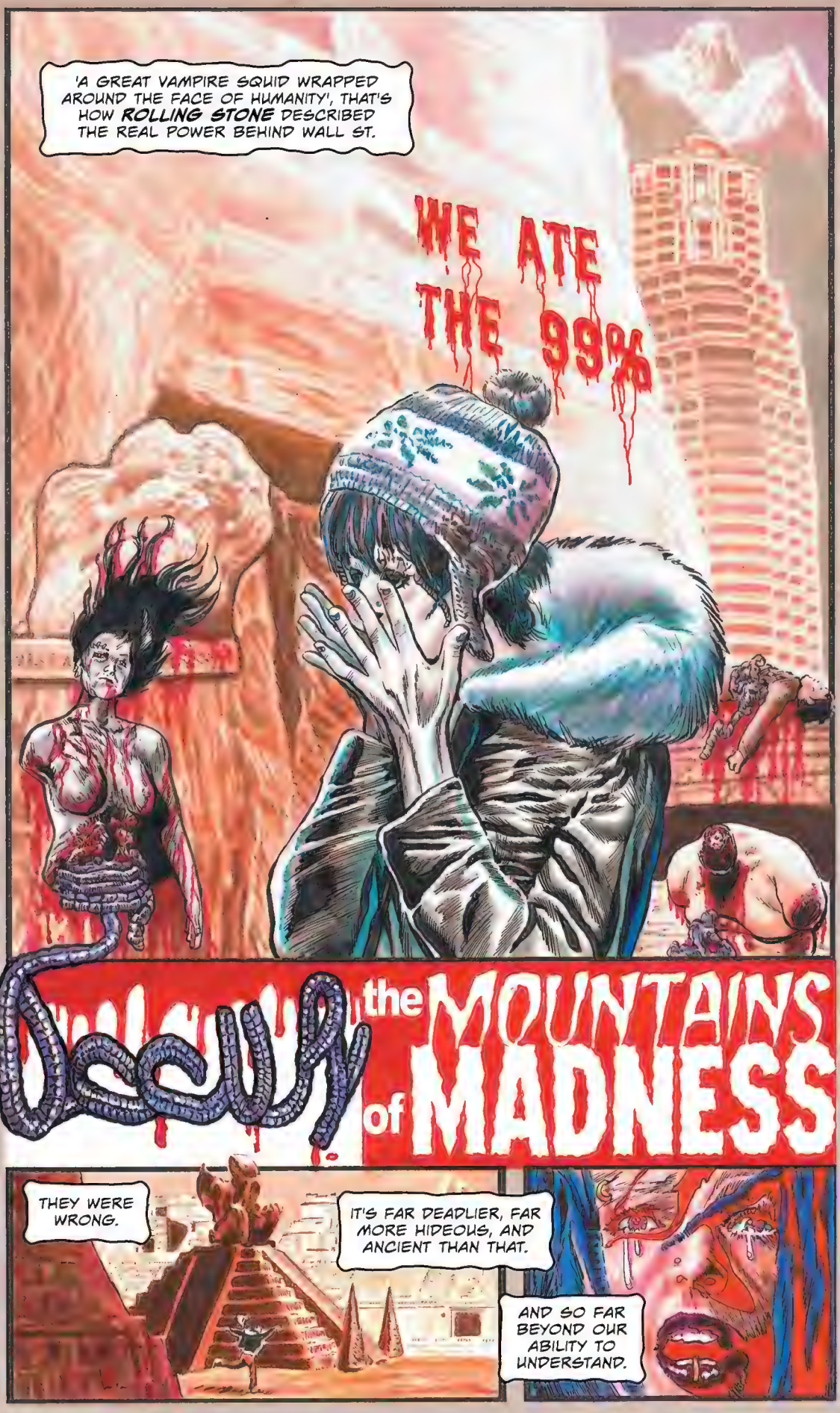
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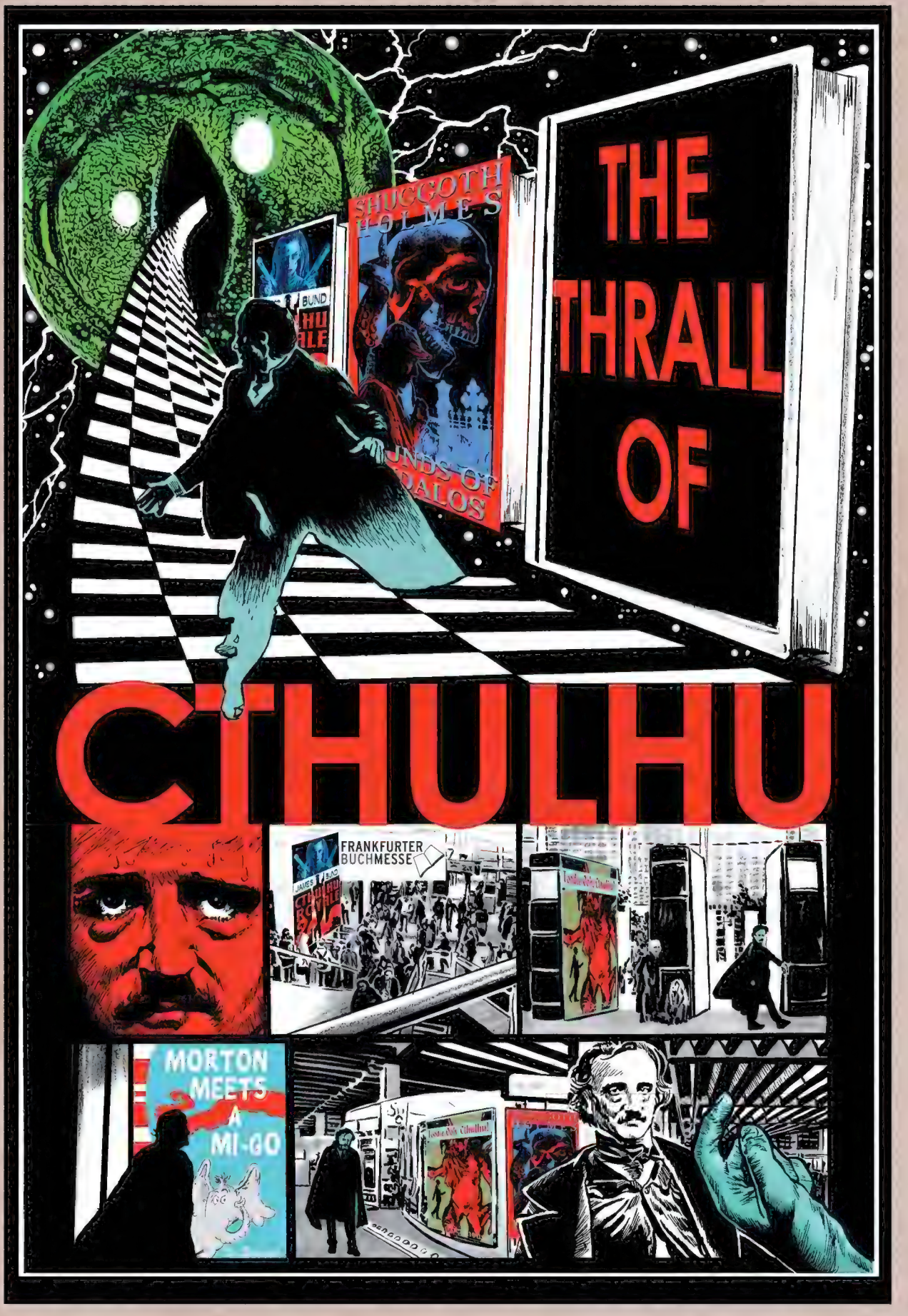
WE ATE THE 99%
the MOUNTAINS of MADNESS
THEY WERE WRONG.
IT'S FAR DEADLIER, FAR MORE HIDEOUS, AND ANCIENT THAN THAT.
AND SO FAR BEYOND OUR ABILITY TO UNDERSTAND.

OUT IN WISMOUTH

The COVER out of SPACE


THE THRALL OF CTHULHU
SHUGGOTH HOLMES
FRANKFURTER BUCHMESSE
MORTON MEETS A MI-GO

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Rob Moran and Jasper Bark would like to thank Paul Rafferty, Mindy Lopkin, Harry Markos and Ian Sharman for helping us get this book into a publishable form. We would also like to thank the following backers of our 2016 Indiegogo campaign. Without your generosity, support and most especially patience (given that it took over six years to deliver this book) the preceding work would not have been possible. I don't think words can properly express how grateful we are that you backed this campaign and that you hung on in until we delivered it. Thank you from the bottom of our black and worm ridden hearts.

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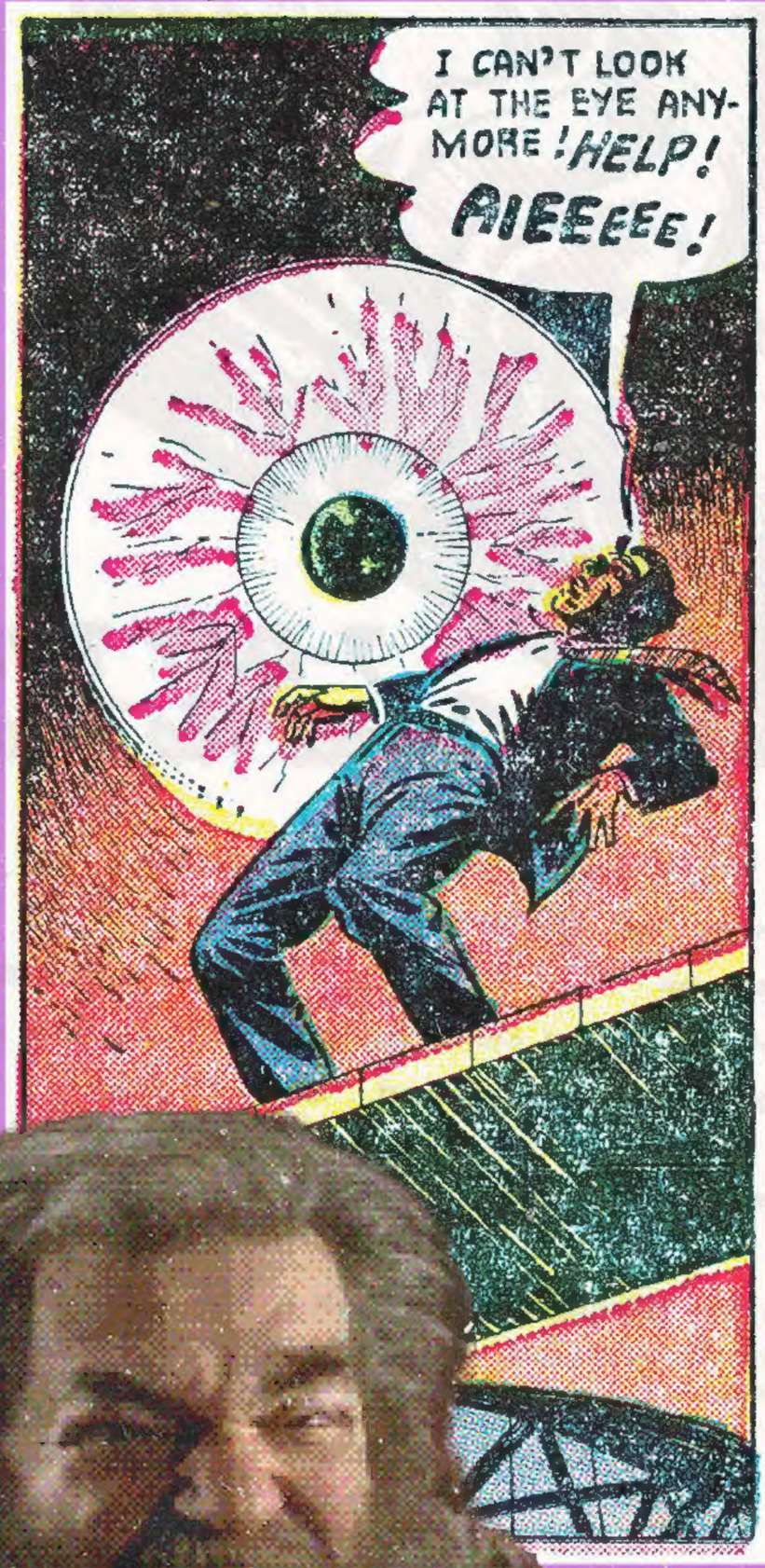

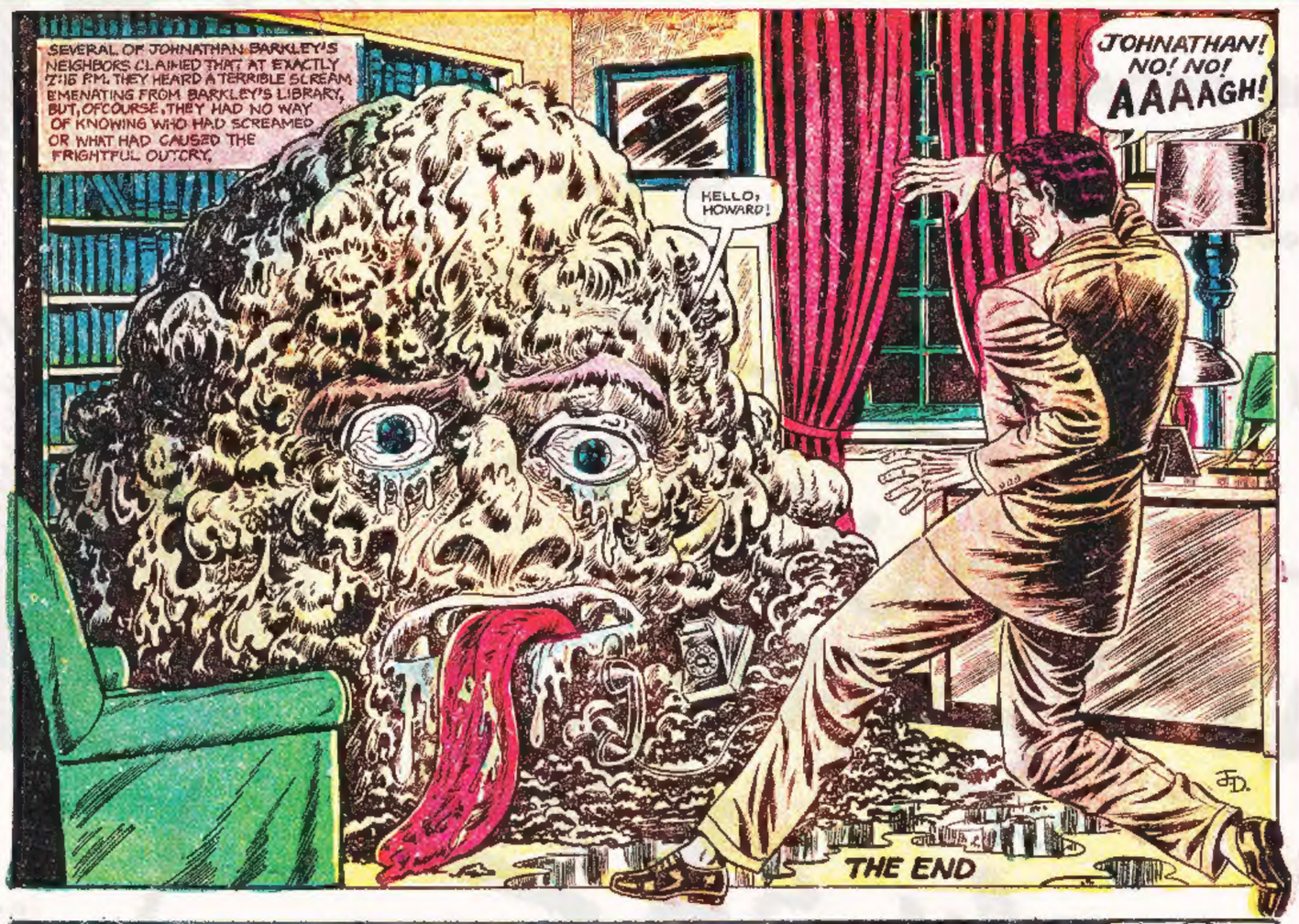
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THE END

...NOW ALL IS PEACEFUL IN SPRINGFIELD... FOR THERE IS NO MORE GOSSIP... THEY HAVE LEARNED THAT THOU SHALT... HEAR NO EVIL... SEE NO EVIL... SPEAK NO EVIL!
The End

...AND I AM NOT A NUT BAG

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